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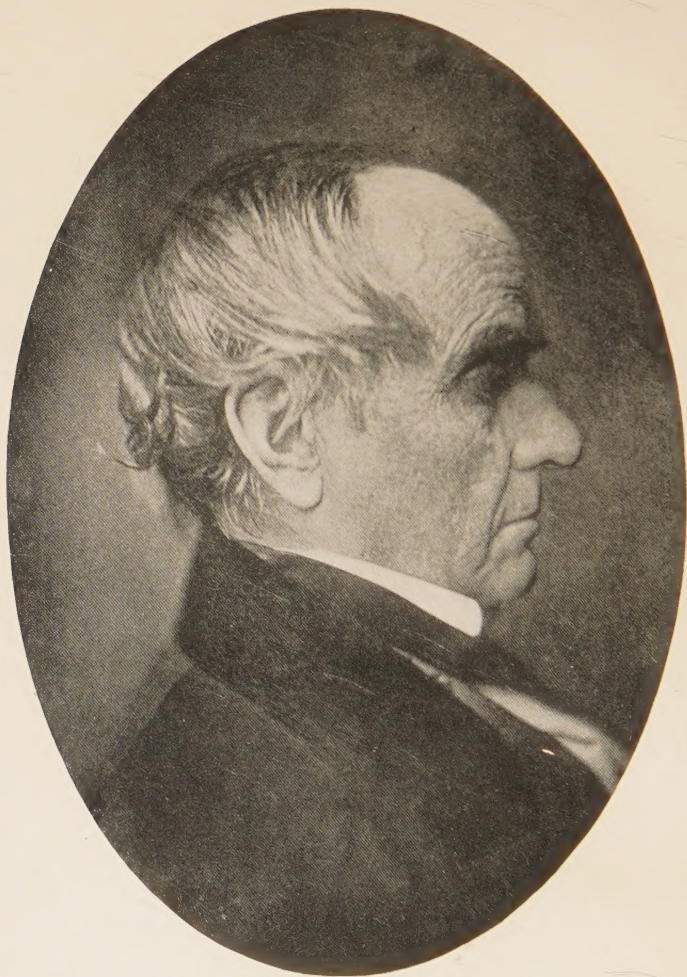


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DANIEL WEBSTER

For Young Americans

*“ A roof beneath the mountain pines ;
The cloisters of a hill-girt plain ;
The front of life’s embattled lines ;
A grave beside the sounding main.”*



DANIEL WEBSTER.

*From a daguerreotype by T. D. Jones.
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DANIEL WEBSTER

For Young Americans

Comprising the Greatest Speeches of "The Defender
of the Constitution," selected and arranged for
the Youth of the United States, to which are
added the Declaration of Independence, the
Constitution of the United States, and
Washington's Farewell Address

With an Introduction and Notes by
CHARLES F. RICHARDSON
Professor of English in Dartmouth College

And an Essay on Webster as a Master of English Style
BY EDWIN P. WHIPPLE

Illustrated

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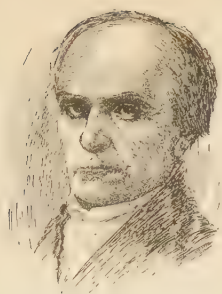
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DANIEL WEBSTER

CHRONOLOGY

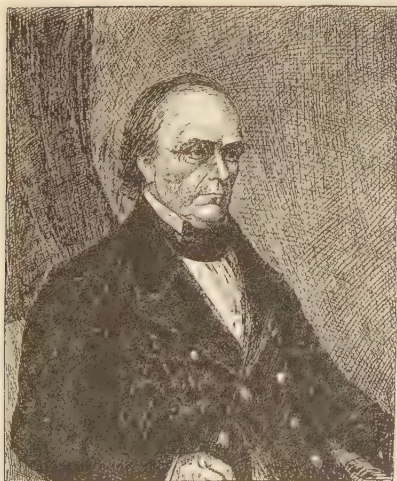
Born at Salisbury, now Franklin, New Hampshire	January 18, 1782
Graduated at Dartmouth College	1801
Admitted to the bar	1805
Practised law in Boscawen, New Hampshire	1805-7
Removed to Portsmouth, New Hampshire	1807
Member of the United States House of Representatives	
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Died at Marshfield, Massachusetts	October 24, 1852



WEBSTER,

THE AMERICAN ORATOR



Daniel Webster.

By A. G. Hoit.

THE modern world finds it hard to understand why, to the Greeks, oratory seemed the consummate form of intellectual expression. Important as were the drama, the epic, architecture, and sculpture in the Athenian mind, the spoken word was held to be the finest result of all that was sought in education. Rhetoric, the art of argumentative persuasion,

was the flower and finality of study. Nothing was so important, in Greek life, as the power of influencing minds by an uttered appeal combining force and finish, logical cogency and individual influence.

**Oratory in
literature.**

Modern education is still the science and the art of applied individual effectiveness at a given time and place. But in the world of to-day men are moved by

books and the newspaper, by brief telegraphic despatches or typewritten letters, by the acts or unstudied utterances of masters of commerce or industry or professional skill, more often than by that which can in any sense be called eloquence. A single oration, it is true, may affect the politics of nations, and make or destroy the position of the utterer; but it is idle to deny that even the congresses and parliaments of our time are more frequently moved by what their members read, or by what they hear in conversation, than by such appeals as were common in the past. The successful speech or sermon of to-day is that which is evidently true and useful, not that which is passionate or elaborate. Plain blunt men, who speak right on, have a greater vogue than the few modern Brutuses. The complex new civilization, or even its parts, can ill be reached by the methods of the rostrum.

It must be admitted, too, that the great orators of the past are for the most part names rather than facts, in the minds of the majority. They are praised but not read, save as Demosthenes and Cicero are read in the class-room. When the reader seeks to re-create for himself the impression made by past eloquence, he is likely to be at a loss to discover, in cold type, the secrets of the triumphs of the spoken word. If the pleaders of the present are too near, those of bygone centuries are superfluous. Like the actor, the orator pays the price of subsequent neglect, though he may win the triumph of immediate admiration. The written word remains, but the reported speech is less likely than the poem, the novel, or the history to rekindle the coals of enthusiasm.

The orator who survives not only in name and in the currency of a few phrases, but also in the actual influ-

ence of speeches still talked about and still read and still fulfilling their mission, must have had a mighty message, and said it mightily. Such a survival is that of the name and fame of Daniel Webster.

To one of their authors the Germans apply the admiring expression "the only," because of the peculiarity of his genius and his achievement. In the history of American oratory the primacy of Webster is not questioned or even discussed. Opinions may differ concerning the claims of Emerson, Poe, or Longfellow to be considered the most representative American poet; critics may disagree as to the primacy of Hawthorne in our list of authors; or it may be maintained that the most solid intellectual achievement of the United States is to be found in the field of history; but in the division of oratory there is none to dispute Webster's claim. There are, of course, great political documents like the Declaration or the Constitution, the latter of which Gladstone declared to be the mightiest political work ever struck from the mind of man; and there are such framers of enduring party systems as Hamilton and Jefferson; but in the roll of speakers there is none to challenge the place of the orator of Bunker Hill and Plymouth, the eulogist of Adams and Jefferson, the sonorous expounder of the Constitution, the epoch-making defender of national unity. If Webster has a rival it is not his old antagonist Hayne, — now chiefly remembered because he was answered, — not Otis, either of the Adamses, Henry, Calhoun, Choate, Everett, Sumner, or Phillips, but Abraham Lincoln. No single speech by Webster, possibly none by any orator of ancient or modern times, has become a classic like Lincoln's address at Gettysburg. But the Gettysburg speech, and to a certain

extent the Second Inaugural, was the condensed result of a fiery time, the expression in a single page of the intensity of a great war. Abraham Lincoln, the "first American," as Lowell called him, would have been the first to declare that the collection of his own speeches and state papers is in no possible way to be compared with the works of Webster, which are admired for their rhetoric, studied for their wisdom, declaimed by school-boys, and cited in congressional debates as though they possessed the weight of judicial decisions.

The career of Webster seems to give a double answer to the perennial question whether the man makes his times, or the times the man. His name brings at once to mind the general period in which the United States of America came into being as a federate nation. Samuel Adams was the pioneer in the cause of local self-government in the colonies, Washington was the general, the statesman, and the indispensable foundation of his country's glory; Lincoln sums up the great movement which ended in the emancipation of the slave; and we have had other chief executives who, like Jefferson, Jackson, and Grant, have given a national largeness to the country they have governed and served. But, as we now see him, Webster, who never reached the presidency, was in a chronological and evolutionary sense inapplicable in the case of any one of the great men just named, a historical summation of his time.

Both his birth and his death coincided with important periods. He was born in 1782, one year before the peace which brought the Revolutionary struggle to a close, and seven years prior to the time when the new nation started on its career under the new Constitution, with Washington as its first president. Those

The man and
his times.

1782, 1783,
and 1789.

seven years have no parallel in importance, as regards the constitutional development of modern civilization and government, save in that movement, a hundred years before, which banished James II., enthroned William and Mary as representatives of the popular will, and established the Protestant and Whig Succession. He died in 1852, two years after that Compromise of 1850 which sought to postpone the great struggle between the Northern and the Southern States, and nine years before the guns of South Carolina fired on the flag above Fort Sumter. He had come to voting age in the expansionist administration of Jefferson. At the time of attempted nullification in 1832 he was fifty years old, in the very prime of his powers. At first, and perhaps always, a theoretical believer in the desirability of freedom of trade, he had later accepted the necessity of protective legislation for the development of American manufactures. In his whole public career he had stood, more than any other American statesman, for the gradual consolidation and extension of national powers, interstate commerce, internal improvements, a foreign policy at once firm and peaceable; for all, in fact, which we sum up in the phrase the Making of the Union.

Many an American had lived and died in fidelity to the idea of an indissoluble union of indestructible States. That idea is no man's invention or peculiar property. It was slowly developed by many causes in a hundred years. But Webster, more than any other American, made a truism out of an uncertainty. Any one who follows the history of colonial bickerings and rivalries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, or who reads the story of the conventions preceding the adoption

The incarnation of the Union idea.

of the Constitution of the United States, well knows the extreme improbability that any properly unified nation could be formed of elements so unlike as were the thirteen colonies in origin, sources of wealth, occupation, climate, and foreign relations. A common feeling had made them one as toward the irregular aggressions of King George III. and an unwise parliamentary majority. But even during the Revolutionary struggle there were sharp differences of opinion between colony and colony. When that struggle was over it was felt by many that the erection of a central government was fraught with perils greater than those escaped by throwing off the English yoke. Later, men and regions differed over the assumption of State debts, national finances, the tariff, internal improvements, territorial accessions, and the ever-present slavery question. More than once there was suggested a division of States the interests of which were as divergent as those of the various parts of Austria-Hungary to-day. Suggestions of this sort by no means came from one section alone. They continued during the whole of Webster's life.

The Constitution had been adopted by slender majorities in State after State. Logical theorists maintained that the first nine States which ratified that document, and made it binding, really seceded from the remaining four, and created a new nation without proper thought of the omitted States, which were true nationalities during and after the Confederation. Therefore, in times of trouble, the Constitution was lightly esteemed. New England was largely hostile to the War of 1812, even to the danger-point of disloyalty. South Carolina, in nullification days, advanced the extremist assertions of the rights

**Prevalence
of disunion
theories.**

of a State to review national action. A little later, in the middle of the nineteenth century, Northern abolitionists were only less ready than Southern slaveholders to talk of peaceable secession. If a convention of proslavery men at Nashville, Tennessee, adopted an address looking toward a severance of the ties that bound the Union, similar action was taken by antislavery gatherings in Ohio, in Worcester, Massachusetts, and in Faneuil Hall itself. The Constitution, because it recognized slavery and gave slaveholders additional votes in proportion to the chattels they owned, was frankly and repeatedly called, by the extreme abolitionists, a compact with hell.

Nor was this talk felt to be treasonable. The anonymous editor of a Boston edition of Webster's great second speech in the Senate, January 26, 1830, in reply to Hayne, courageously admits, in his preface to that most famous of union-making documents, that Massachusetts "once held and asserted, erroneously we admit, those very principles which Mr. Hayne defends, and which Virginia and South Carolina annually and solemnly reassert and proclaim." James Russell Lowell, in the first "Biglow Paper" (June, 1846), made his Hosea Biglow say:

"Ef I'd *my* way, I had ruther
 We should go to work an' part —
 They take one way, we take t' other —
 Guess it would n't break my heart.
 Man hed ough' to put asunder
 Them thet God has noways jined;
 An' I should n't gretly wonder
 Ef there 's thousand o' my mind."

The difference between these opinions and that of Jefferson Davis was only one of locality.

Against all these ideas of separation Daniel Webster set his utmost powers during his whole career. Beginning at the age of eighteen in a 4th of July oration at Hanover, New Hampshire, and ending with the 7th of March speech in Congress, two years before his death, he first, last, and always insisted that the Union was indissoluble; a sacred and perennial possession. Whatever was lost, that must be kept: by affection, by compromise, by battles in parliamentary walls, by peaceful discussion, by the spread of popular instruction, in season and out of season. The strength of that Union is to-day due, in great part, to his forethought and devotion.

Three miles northwest of the town of Franklin, New Hampshire, stands a large dilapidated farmhouse, of which the ell is the only remaining portion of the birthplace of Daniel Webster. A few rods distant, a boulder by the roadside bears the inscription: "This rock marks the site of the house in which Daniel Webster was born, January 18, 1782." The fragment of the house was long since removed from its original location, and the ground on which it stood, once a part of the town of Salisbury, is now included in Franklin. The hills, valleys, farmland, and rough country roads of the neighborhood form a picture neither beautiful nor ugly, having the appearance of those parts of rural New England which have lost, rather than gained, in population and wealth, during the past half-century. At the time of Webster's birth there were few New Hampshire settlements north of Salisbury, though Hanover and Charlestown, to name but two towns, had been settled years before.

Webster's father, Ezekiel, was a man of character,

intelligence, and local prominence, who had settled in Salisbury as one of the pioneers in the slowly developed interior of the colony of New Hampshire. He fought in the Revolution, attaining the rank of captain; and distinguished himself in the battle of Bennington, his soldierly qualities being such as to elicit compliments from General Stark and from Washington himself. At the close of the war Captain Webster, like the more famous Israel Putnam and many another brave combatant, returned to his farm and served his neighborhood as local justice and generally useful citizen. His boys led the rude but happy life of the farmer's family, which Whittier has described in "Snow Bound." There was no lack of rough comfort, but luxuries were wholly lacking, and a college education, if got at all, was secured by sacrifice on the part of the student's parents, and sometimes on that of his brother or sister, as well as himself. New Hampshire offered, however, the means of both preparatory and collegiate education, Phillips Exeter Academy having been established in 1781, and Dartmouth College in 1769.

Webster's preparation for college was, if somewhat slender as viewed to-day, as good as his neighborhood afforded. At home, at Exeter, and under the private instruction of the Rev. Samuel Wood of the adjacent town of Boscawen — who, in accordance with a common clerical fashion, "fitted" dozens of boys — he got a sound knowledge of Latin and some acquaintance with the other requirements for admission. In boyhood, youth, and manhood he was a constant and careful reader in those masterpieces of expository and descriptive prose which formed so large a part of the English literature of the eighteenth century, and which constituted, as Benjamin Franklin proved, a decent rhetori-

cal education in themselves. Thus prepared, in the late summer of 1797, in his sixteenth year, he went to Hanover, spent his first night in the house in which his great colleague, Rufus Choate, was afterwards married, and became a Freshman in Dartmouth College, then in its third decade, and numerically the second among New England institutions of learning.

Between 1797 and 1801 Dartmouth Hall was, save the large church, the only considerable building possessed by the institution. It contained the
 Dartmouth College. chapel, library, lecture-rooms, and a few apartments for students, one of which, Number 1, Webster is said to have occupied in his Senior year. In Freshman, Sophomore, and Junior years he roomed in village houses, still standing. It is difficult to decide, in view of the simplicity and freedom of *meum* and *tuum* in those early days, who were his "room-mates," in the present sense of the term; those who were most frequently in and out of his modest quarters were George Farrar, of the class of 1800, and William Farrar, Freeborn Adams, Joseph Loveland, and James Hervey Bingham of his own class.

In college he was easily the most noteworthy undergraduate, good in general scholarship, well read, "posted" regarding current events, conspicuous in the forensic work of the United Fraternity and Phi Beta Kappa societies, influential in all undergraduate doings, and chosen by his classmates to deliver a eulogy on one of their number who died shortly before Commencement of 1801.

The most salient episode of his college career was his delivery, on the 4th of July, 1800, at the age of eighteen, by request of the townspeople of Hanover, of the oration previously mentioned, in which he clearly

and with considerable eloquence outlined that great argument for a permanent Union of States which was to occupy his mind, in one way or another, for the remaining fifty-two years of his life. An early speech.

The story that Webster "tore up" his diploma after his graduation, on Wednesday, August 26, 1801, is a miserable fiction, long since disproved by investigation, and now undeserving of an instant's thought on the part of those who remember his lifelong devotion to the "small college" of his love, to which he did the largest filial service ever devoted to an American institution of learning.

After graduation Webster postponed his entrance upon professional studies in order

Teacher. to earn money by

teaching in the academy at Fryeburg, Maine, — just across the New Hamp-

shire line, and under the shadow of the foot-hills of the White Mountains, — to help his brother Ezekiel continue at Dartmouth, whither he had gone through Daniel's influence. Their father's means were narrow, and for brother to help brother seemed a pleasure, rather than generosity or self-sacrifice. Traditions of Webster's work at Fryeburg are few, but, as usual, he was called on for a public oration, which has been preserved and printed. It does not materially differ from its prototype of July 4, 1800, either in sentiment or in style. New England rural communities, a century ago, were



*Daniel Webster at Twenty-two.
From an old miniature.*

fond of oratory on every available occasion, and Webster's tastes found frequent opportunity for expression. At a period when, in a new nation, almost everything was still to be done, young men were given all the chances of which they showed themselves worthy; and Webster's advancement was rapid.

Soon he was enabled to begin his legal studies, and entered the office of Christopher Gore of Boston, the
Legal studies. able jurist for whom Gore Hall in the Harvard Law School was afterwards named. Law schools were then non-existent, but the bar in New Hampshire and Massachusetts (then including the District of Maine) was of distinguished ability, and the instruction to be obtained in law offices was, though sporadic, direct, thorough, and practical. The strong mind of the mature man often impressed, and was impressed by, that of the student, in ways impossible in the lecture-room or the moot-court. Gore's aid to the young Webster — already a youth of signal promise — was of great value, and to his instruction he added the wise counsel that Webster decline the proffered clerkship of a court near his New Hampshire home, at a salary which, in comparison with his former revenues, seemed commanding. Money was certainly needed both by himself and his impecunious relatives, but Gore saw that an immediate advantage would cramp and endanger the possibilities of a great career.

That career opened when Webster, having been admitted to the bar, and "hung out his shingle" for a brief time in Boscawen, began practice in Portsmouth, which was the most important town in New Hampshire. Its own bar was eminent, and those of the neighboring Exeter and Dover scarcely less so. The great figure among the lawyers of the State was Jeremiah Mason,

now but a name, as he left no "works," and did not fill the highest judicial or political stations. All contemporary testimony, however, including that of Webster in middle life, agrees that Mason's mind and powers, especially as a jury lawyer, were of the mightiest; and Webster's professional associations or contests with him were of gladiatorial value for the next decade.

Webster's public life in the national field dates from his election to the House of Representatives, as a member from New Hampshire, in 1812, when he was thirty years old, and it closed only with his death. From the first, by heredity, by conviction, and by association with the influential class in New England, he allied himself with the Federalist party, which stood, as over against its great rival, the Anti-Federalist or Republican (later the Democratic) party, for a strong central government, slow naturalization of immigrants, and a general control of affairs by the intelligent and propertied classes. In Congress, and in his addresses to his constituents and others, he opposed the War of 1812 with England, as unnecessary, sectional, and injurious, not only to New England but to the country at large. It is interesting to note, for the benefit of those who think it improper to criticise the course of the government under which they chance to live, in beginning or continuing any war, that Webster, at the outset of his political career, thus strenuously opposed an armed conflict, even refusing to vote for supplies for its maintenance, as in his last years he did not favor the war with Mexico.

When Webster, seeking a broader field, removed to Boston in 1816, he possessed almost every requisite for legal and political success: a clear mind, the ability to see both sides of a case without weakening his earnest

support of his own side, a logical progressiveness in developing arguments, a knowledge of the place for facts and the place for appeals, and a mastery of language that ranged from the simplest Saxon to the sonorous perorations and Latin quotations then in vogue. At the time of his removal he was better known in Massachusetts than any other lawyer or politician in northern New England; and there was no delay in according him his deserved place in the courts and in public life. He served Massachusetts in the constitutional convention of 1820; in the United States House of Representatives between 1823 and 1827; and in the Senate between that year and 1841.

The chronology of these eventful years, and to a large extent the history of the United States in its second period of national development, is to be found in the dates of his principal speeches. His personality was so commanding, and his powers so great in many fields, that it is difficult to separate the various undertakings of his middle life; but it will be convenient to consider him, in turn, as lawyer, as commemorative orator, and as statesman.

Four of his most significant appearances as a lawyer were in the Dartmouth College case before the United States Supreme Court (1818), in the case of **Webster as lawyer.** *Gibbons v. Ogden* (1823), in the trial of Joseph Francis Knapp for the murder of Joseph White, in Salem, Massachusetts (1830), and in the attempt to break the will of Stephen Girard, the eccentric Philadelphia philanthropist (1844).

His national reputation was first won by his victorious conduct, before the United States Supreme Court, of a case which led to one of the most famous and far-reaching of American judicial decisions. The legisla-

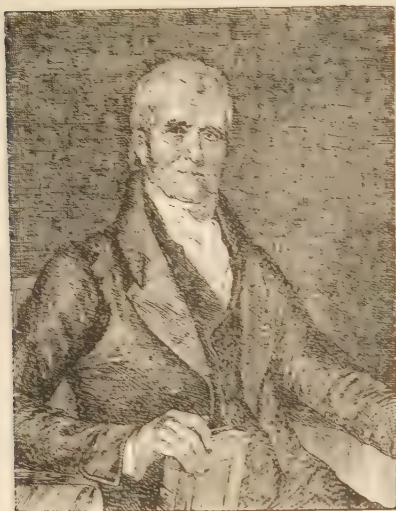


ture of New Hampshire, after a controversy combining political, religious, local, and personal acrimonies which need not now be recalled, had largely amended the original charter of Dartmouth College, ^{The Dartmouth College case.} granted by King George III. in 1769, through Governor John Wentworth of the colony, to Eleazar Wheelock, the first president of the college, and his associates on the board of trustees. A new corporation had been created by the legislature, with a new name (Dartmouth University) and an enlarged governing board, the effect being to take the government of the college out of the control of a majority of its twelve trustees, and to transfer it to a different body, created by the will of the elected lawmakers of the State. The principle involved was the right of a State legislature to alter the nature and control of incorporated institutions. The case was brought to trial before the State Supreme Court at Exeter; and though the old college was defended against the new university by Webster and Jeremiah Mason it lost, the court deciding that the changes were legal. Appeal was made to the United States Supreme Court on the ground that the National Constitution prohibited States from legislating in such a way as to impair the obligation of contracts. Confining his attention to this point, Webster, on this appeal, summoned to the defence of his *alma mater* all his constitutional knowledge, logical power, and eloquence of sentiment, winning his case, re-establishing the college in its ancient rights, and settling the principle that private chartered corporations are not at the mercy of changing majorities in local legislatures. Webster's colleague in this second trial was Joseph Hopkinson; his opponents William Wirt (then attorney-general) and John Holmes. Among the judges were the great

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John Marshall, who is said to have been deeply affected by Webster's eloquence, and Joseph Story, who began to take notes, but, in his interest to lose no spoken

word, forgot to continue them.



John Marshall.

Learned jurists have maintained, with truth, that the principle of this decision in the Dartmouth College case ought not to be carried to the extent of the assertion that no charter can ever be modified, in the slightest degree, by any legislature; but the danger was all the other way, and the essential soundness and serviceableness of the

decision have not been denied or impaired since it was rendered. It resulted in two things besides the welfare of the college: first, it greatly strengthened the increasing power of the central government as supervisory over the doings of the several States; and second, it made Webster the most famous of the younger constitutional lawyers of the country.

Another important decision secured by Webster, in its bearing upon his lifework and upon the development of the idea of national control of internal affairs, was that in the case of *Gibbons vs. Ogden*. The point at issue was of great importance: whether a State, under

the commercial provisions of the National Constitution, could grant to individuals monopolies of navigation in its own waters. The negative now seems too nearly obvious for discussion. If a single State can grant to a single corporation or individual a virtual monopoly of traffic by land or water, the United States is clearly, for commercial purposes, a collection of little separate nations, or at least of Bavarias in a German empire. The decision secured by Webster in this case was perhaps inevitable; but up to that time it had remained in doubt whether the inland waters of the nation were really public national highways. Notwithstanding its forbidding title, Webster's argument in this trial may well be read as a body of permanently important principles, and as an illustration of his sun-clear power of making the opposite argument seem impossible.

**The Gibbons
versus
Ogden case.**

A related plea by Webster was that made in the case of the United States *vs.* McCulloch, in which he showed that a State cannot tax the Federal government. It seems strange, to-day, that such questions were ever raised; but the evolution of state-national relations was a slow and complicated process.

**United
States
versus
McCulloch.**

It is a curious coincidence that the two strongest delineations of death in American literature are connected with the ancient city of Salem, Massachusetts: Hawthorne's death of Governor Pyncheon, in "The House of Seven Gables," and Webster's story, to a jury, of the way in which old Captain White had been murdered in his sleep by an assassin hired by two brothers who expected to gain financial advantage from the deed. The passage beginning with "The assassin enters through the win-

**Plea in the
White murder
trial.**

dow," is worthy of the most powerful novelist; while that which leads up to the climax, "suicide is confession," is at once a masterpiece of English prose and of forensic argumentation. Webster was not present at the murder; he was a pleader, not a testifying witness; but tangible proof itself could hardly have shaken any juryman's belief that the progress of facts was precisely as Webster had said.

Before passing to the second large division of Webster's orations, it must frankly be admitted that his works contain one argument which was relatively a failure. Notwithstanding its splendor of language and the eloquence of its tribute to the Christian ministry and the influence of Christianity upon society and the body politic, Webster's much-praised argument at Philadelphia, in the attempt to break the will of Stephen Girard, was the weakest of his best-known legal appeals. Girard, an eccentric philanthropist, had founded a great college for the support and education of orphans; and it was sought to break the will for the reason that it forever excluded ministers of religion from the institution. If Webster's defence of Christianity was eloquent and true, his argument that non-Christian charity is impossible was so nearly sophistical as to raise the question whether he could really have believed it himself. The Hebrew charitable institutions in New York City are alone enough to disprove it. Edward Everett Hale, who heard the speech, says that it did not seem to him that Webster's heart was much in the matter. But the address, in its claim that Christianity was essentially a part of the law of the land, was widely popular and influential.

These representative cases show that Webster was a lawyer of varied powers and potent influence, aside from

his more conspicuous work in commemorative oratory and in statecraft. The White murder speech, perhaps the greatest address ever made to a jury, shows what he might have been, and what he was, as a criminal lawyer. This was, however, but an episode in his public career. But the Dartmouth College and Gibbons *vs.* Ogden pleas prove that his labors as a constitutional expounder and upbuilder were as efficient in the courts as in Congress. Everywhere he was a great, representative, constructive American Unionist. It made no difference where he was, his work was the same. If ever a man lived and died for an idea, it was Daniel Webster. That idea, as we must note again and again, was the integral strength and lasting structure of the nation into which he had been born.

To read Webster's Plymouth oration of 1820, his speech when the corner-stone of Bunker Hill monument was laid in 1825, the eulogy of Adams and Jefferson, the replies to Hayne, and the Seventh of March speech in 1850, is to get a general history of the United States to the close of its second national period, and also to obtain a sound knowledge of the principles of constitutional government in general. Seldom, in the history of oratory, have time, place, and circumstance been turned by a speaker to successes so enduring. At Plymouth he not only estimated with justice the character and influence of the Pilgrims, but, in a passage less familiar than others in the oration, emphasized the essential difference between Roman and later English colonization in a way which has lessons, to-day, for America in the Philippines and for England in South Africa:

Commemorative orations.

Plymouth, December 22, 1820.

"Roman colonization resembled, far less than that of the Greeks, the original settlements of this country. Power and dominion were the objects of Rome, even in her colonial establishments. Her whole exterior aspect was for centuries hostile and terrific. She grasped at dominion, from India to Britain, and her measures of colonization partook of the character of her general system. Her policy was military, because her objects were power, ascendancy, and subjugation. Detachments of emigrants from Rome incorporated themselves with, and governed, the original inhabitants of conquered countries. She sent citizens where she had first sent soldiers; her law followed her sword. Her colonies were a sort of military establishment, so many advanced posts in the career of her domain. A governor from Rome ruled the new colony with absolute sway, and often with unbounded rapacity. In Sicily, in Gaul, in Spain, and in Asia the power of Rome prevailed, not nominally only, but really and effectually. Those who immediately exercised it were Roman; the tone and tendency of its administration, Roman. Rome herself continued to be the heart and centre of the great system which she had established. Extortion and rapacity, finding a wide and often rich field of action in the provinces, looked nevertheless to the banks of the Tiber, as the scene in which their ill-gotten treasures should be displayed; or, if a spirit of more honest acquisition prevailed, the object, nevertheless, was ultimate enjoyment in Rome itself. If our own history and our own times did not sufficiently expose the inherent and incurable evils of provincial government, we might see them portrayed, to our amazement, in the desolated and ruined provinces of the Roman empire."

Webster, the American Orator xxxiii

As a piece of historical writing this stands midway between Gibbon and Macaulay, with some of the merits of each. If here, as elsewhere, Webster shows some of the powers of the philosophical historian, in the Adams and Jefferson eulogy, delivered in Faneuil Hall, Boston, August 2, 1826, he successfully entered the field of the historical novelist. The supposititious speeches of John Adams and his opponent are as true as truth. Webster possessed and repeatedly showed that prime literary power, the capacity to make his hearers or readers see past men and events in just perspective. Therefore the effect of reading and declaiming his speeches is an education in history and statescraft, as well as in rhetoric and oratory. The second Bunker Hill oration, in particular, is literally familiar to every schoolboy, in Macaulay's overworked phrase; and in its use as a college-entrance requirement it has also proved serviceable in a larger way, — that of preparing our youth for entrance upon the great field of American citizenship.

**Eulogy on
Adams and
Jefferson.**

**Effect of
reading and
declaiming
his speeches.**

**The
Bunker Hill
orations.**

Webster's chief political work was done in the Senate, where he sat continuously from 1827 to 1850, save that between 1841 and 1843 he was Secretary of State under Presidents Harrison and Tyler, and was in private life from 1843 to 1845.

His service as a legislator depended for its value, of course, upon his power of oratory; clear, logical, constructive, eloquent; and also, in good measure, upon his common sense in a national period not unmarked by incertitude.

**Political
oratory.**

One of his earlier successes in Congress was his speech on the Greek revolution, delivered in the lower

house in 1824. Everything then tempted an orator to irresponsible extravagance in eulogy of any national effort toward freedom; but Webster's utterance was as just as it was liberty-loving. His analysis of the essential selfishness, narrowness, and mediævalism of the so-called "Holy Alliance" (by which, after the downfall of Napoleon, the monarchs of Austria, Prussia, Russia, France, England, and some smaller powers bound themselves to regulate Europe on alleged Christian principles) was thorough, and in some ways prophetic. As far as the subsequent attitude of the two Anglo-Saxon nations toward international politics has been sober and beneficent, it has fulfilled the hopes then expressed by the speaker.

Of minor importance to the student of oratory are the speeches delivered by Webster at various times, on the perennial question of free-trade, tariff for revenue, and protection. In brief, he began, like most college graduates, as a believer in freedom of commercial interchange; and perhaps could always have said, with President Garfield: "I am for a protection which leads to ultimate free-trade." His views, however, and the expression of them, modified as he went on in his legislative career. Between 1816 and 1824, as he said in 1832, he was opposed to tariff legislation for the benefit of particular classes in the community, or with direct reference to the protection of manufacturers. He opposed, if he did not doubt, the right to tax for the purpose of helping specified commercial undertakings. Later he changed his words and his votes, and explained the apparent inconsistency by saying that he had never believed in creating factories by prohibiting importations; but that, since the contrary view had prevailed and the protected factories

**The Greek
revolution.**

**Free trade
and
protection.**

had been built, he would vote for their maintenance, in justice, under existing conditions. His various speeches on the subject have some historic interest, but little inherent value, either as literary products or as contributions to economic theory.

He threw a great deal more force, and consequent eloquence, into the controversies which convulsed American politics in the days of Jackson and Van Buren (1829-1841) over presidential prerogative and the appointing power. Necessarily and consistently supporting Jackson in his hostile attitude toward attempted nullification in South Carolina, he opposed Jackson's desire and tendency to take into his own hands various powers which had previously been exercised by Congress, or by the Senate alone. As regards "spoils politics," and the use of public offices for political reward or influence, he was an early and unswerving advocate of civil-service reform, and of appointments and retentions for merit. The modern "civil-service reformer" could ask for no more comprehensive statement of his ideal than that which Webster made in a speech on the Appointing and Removing Power (Senate, February 16, 1835):

Presidential
prerogative
and the
appointing
power.

Civil-ser-
vice reform.

"The theory of our institutions is plain; it is, that government is an agency created for the good of the people, and that every person in office is the agent and servant of the people. Offices are created, not for the benefit of those who are to fill them, but for the public convenience; and they ought to be no more in number, nor should higher salaries be attached to them, than the public service requires. This is the theory. But the difficulty in practice is to prevent a direct reversal of all this; to prevent public offices from being considered as

intended for the use and emolument of those who can obtain them. There is a headlong tendency to this, and it is necessary to restrain it by wise and effective legislation. There is still another, and perhaps a greatly more mischievous result of extensive patronage in the hands of a single magistrate, to which I have already incidentally alluded; and that is, that men in office have begun to think themselves mere agents and servants of the appointing power, and not agents of the government or the country. It is, in an especial manner, important, if it be practicable, to apply some corrective to this kind of feeling and opinion. It is necessary to bring back public officers to the conviction that they belong to the country, and not to any administration, nor to any one man. The army is the army of the country; the navy is the navy of the country; neither of them is either the mere instrument of the administration for the time being, nor of him who is at the head of it. The post-office, the land office, the custom-house, are, in a like manner, institutions of the country, established for the good of the people; and it may well alarm the lovers of free institutions, when all the offices in these several departments are spoken of, in high places, as being but 'spoils to victory,' to be enjoyed by those who are successful in a contest in which they profess this grasping of the spoils to have been the object of their effort."

As Secretary of State under Harrison, Tyler, and Fillmore, 1841-43 and 1850-52, Webster's service

**Diplomatic
service.**

was both conservative and constructive. To Tyler, in particular, he was of inestimable personal value at the time of the break-up of the Whig party; but it was equally important to the country that

there should be a firm hand at the head of the Cabinet. His chief undertaking was the conclusion of the so-called Webster-Ashburton treaty of 1842, by which a long-standing discussion between England and the United States, over the boundary line between Maine and Canada, was brought to an amicable settlement, and a possible war was averted. Incidentally, the old British assertion of a right to take English-born sailors from American ships — which had been the principal cause of the war of 1812 — was once more brought into discussion. Webster yielded some other points at issue; but concerning this question flatly asserted that “the American government is prepared to say that the practice of impressing seamen from American vessels cannot be hereafter allowed to take place;” and nothing more was ever heard of the grievance.

But he was at the farthest remove from that blatant “Americanism” which has, from time to time in our history, resorted to the amusement, sometimes dangerous and always indefensible, of “twisting the British lion’s tail.” His words Idea of national responsibility. at Oxford, England, July 18, 1839, were like a prophecy of the good-will between England and the United States at the opening of the twentieth century, and were at the same time a solemn statement of the moral responsibility of nations: —

“We live in an age when nations, as well as individuals, are subject to a moral responsibility. Neither governments nor people — thank God for it! — can now trifle with the general sense of the civilized world; and I am sure that the civilized world would hold your country and my country to a very strict account, if, without very plain and apparent reason, deeply affecting the independence and great interests of the nation,

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any controversy between them should have other than an amicable issue."

If Webster did not originate great measures, he gave final force to great principles which, before his efforts for their establishment, had been insecure in their hold on the public mind. It would be an exaggeration to say that Webster was the greatest of American diplomats, but his work as Secretary of State was solidly valuable, and his management of the Webster-Ashburton treaty a large achievement in the promotion of peace between the United States and the mother country.

He combined foresight with constructive power, and was, as has been said, a prophet no less than an ex-
Political pounder. In 1834 he insisted upon the im-
foresight. portance to day-laborers of a sound currency. He was one of the first to foresee the future of the Hawaiian Islands. His paper on intercourse with China anticipated some of the problems and hopes of the beginning of the twentieth century, as regards that great and uncertain country. Years before the interstate commerce law, — in a speech on the Sub-Treasury, January 31, 1838, — he showed that uniform commercial regulations throughout the Union were essential under the Constitution, — a fact questioned, obscured, or denied, even after his death, because of the jealousies of the States. "Thus far," says President Tucker of Dartmouth College, "Mr. Webster is the only man who has comprehended the American people. Until a greater American than he shall arise, he will live in the still unfulfilled destiny of the Republic."

Always an advocate of sound money on a specie basis, he opposed all contrary schemes with logical

consistency and effective force. A national currency, and a national expenditure of it, seemed to him a bond of union between the States. That **Sound** currency must rest upon a stable basis. "I **money.** insist," said he on September 28, 1837, "that the duty of Congress is commensurate with its power; that it has authority not only to regulate and control that which others may put forth as money and currency, but that it has the power, and is bound to perform the duty, of seeing that there is established and maintained, at all times, a currency of general credit, equivalent in value to specie, adapted to the wants of commerce and the business of the people, and suited to the existing circumstances of the country."

He believed in the use of the money of the central government for education, roads, canals, all that created a common interest to keep the States to- **Internal im-** together. When arguing, May 25, 1836, for **provements.** governmental purchase of private stock in a canal, he boldly expressed the extremest views. "On the question of constitutional power," he said, "I entertain not a particle of doubt. How is it, let me ask, that we appropriate money for harbors, piers, and breakwaters on the sea-coast? Where do we find power for this? Certainly in no part of the Constitution in which we cannot find equal power to pass this bill. The same clause covers such appropriations, inland as well as on the sea-coast, or else it covers neither. We have foreign commerce, and we have internal commerce; and the power and the duty also of regulating, protecting, aiding, and fostering both, is given in the same words." Again: "This unity of commercial regulation is, in my opinion, indispensable to the safety of the union of the States." January 20, 1830, he said of this policy that

it was called consolidation, but for his part he liked it: it was constitutional consolidation; it was General Washington's consolidation. In the letter submitting the Constitution, the framers of it used these words, "consolidation of the Union;" and he himself was a Unionist, and in this sense a national Republican. When Robert Y. Hayne, of South Carolina, in the "Great Debate" in the Senate, said that South Carolina had tried to keep the United States a federal and prevent its becoming a national government, as Webster would have it; and when Hayne also frankly declared that the South Carolina doctrine of 1828 was the doctrine of Virginia in 1798 (referring to the virtually separatist Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of that year), — Webster replied in the splendid passage beginning, "For myself, sir, I do not admit the competency of South Carolina, or any other State, to prescribe my constitutional duty, or to settle between me and the people the validity of laws of Congress for which I have voted. I decline her umpirage."

Webster's greatest speech, this seven-hour reply to Hayne, January 26, 1830, stood forth from all his oratorical efforts simply because it was the summation of his lifelong studies of constitutional government and his intensest personal convictions. The immediate occasion of its delivery was in some sort accidental; the pending discussion of a question of the public lands was but one of a thousand related debates on the authority of the central government; and his opponent, though a man of respectable parts and undoubted sincerity, was no Calhoun. Mr. Hayne, almost gratuitously, and certainly unexpectedly, had introduced the old question of State rights in a way which combined an airy assertion of the

**The reply
to Hayne.**

supremacy of South Carolina, as a final judge of her own relations to the United States, with flippant and gratuitous sneers at the equally sovereign (on his own theory) State of Massachusetts, and at Webster himself. Webster knew his ground absolutely; his man he made but a starting-point; and thus and then he set forth his entire theory of the relation of the parts of the American nation to the federal unit. The central government, he had always maintained, was, in its constitution and its highest court, the final arbiter of questions of law. Concerning the theory of that central government which he set forth, there had always been variant opinions, and the final arbitrament was still to be found, thirty years afterward, in an appeal to force backed by moral sentiment, — on which, in the last resort, every earthly power must rest. Should we say: “The United States *are* a confederation;” or “The United States *is* a nation?” Was each State a partner, with a right of unquestionable veto, or was it an integral portion, with certain reserved local rights? The latter, was Webster’s reply; and into his elaborate answer he put all the constitutional law, the historical knowledge, the constructive logic, the high appeal, the strenuous denunciation, the mighty passion, the fine irony, the verbal felicity, the massive eloquence, the personal power, and the granite patriotism of which he was master.

After this speech the excellent Mr. Hayne became but an incident in its title; nullification was henceforth to be an impossibility save as forcible secession is always a possibility; the union idea was enormously strengthened and — though speaker and hearers knew it not — the course of future events was modified not only in the legislative chamber, but on the battlefield. Read

everywhere, "spoken" in countless Northern school-houses, pondered over by the legislator and understood by the humblest voter, it took its place midway between John Marshall's decisions and Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg speech as a unifier of the nation.

In connection with this chief oration of Webster the student should give careful reading to the speech delivered February 16, 1833, entitled "The Constitution not a Compact between Sovereign States." While it lacks the fervor and variety of its more famous predecessor, it is one of Webster's greatest productions, a veritable compendium of government, by the "expounder of the Constitution."

The Constitution not a compact between sovereign States.

But while Webster always stood, by heredity, study, and conviction, for a central stable government as on the whole superior to all minor correlated local sovereignties, he carefully avoided the assertion that any representative government could possess a single right save those which it used as trustee for the people. Said he, in a speech in the Senate, on September 14, 1837, on the "Bill to postpone the Payment to the States of the Fourth Instalment of the Surplus Revenue": "For one, I consider government as but a mere agency; it acts not for itself, but for the country; the whole end and design of its being are to promote the general interests of the community. Peculiar interests, selfish interests, exclusive regard for itself, are wholly incompatible with the objects of its institution, and pervert it from its true character as an agency for the people into a separate, dominant power, with purposes and objects exclusively its own." And in the "Constitution not a Compact" speech, while arguing with all his might against nullification by a State, he clearly

recognized the historic truth that a successful combination of physical and moral force is the sole foundation of earthly government: "Any State, before she can prove her right to dissolve the Union, must show her authority to undo what has been done. No State is at liberty to secede, on the ground that she and other States have done nothing but accede. She must show that she has a right to reverse what has been ordained; to unsettle and overthrow what has been established; to reject what the people have adopted; and to break up what they have ratified; because these are the terms which express the transactions which have actually taken place. In other words, she must show her right to make a revolution."

In this connection the historical student should recall that once, in his strenuous objection to a Conscription Bill proposed by the Administration in 1814, Webster, then a member of the House of Representatives from New Hampshire, went so far as to say that, under certain conditions of oppression, "it will be the solemn duty of State Governments to protect their own authority over their own militia, and to interpose between their citizens and arbitrary power." Here, however, he was opposing an assertion of a broad and permanent right to draft soldiers by the central government, "not for the emergencies mentioned in the Constitution, but for long periods, and for the general objects of war." Any apparent inconsistency between this speech (which represented the intense New England Federalist opposition to the war of 1812) and Webster's hostility to South Carolina Nullification, twenty years later, is removed by his indignant denial, at the end of the speech, of the assertion that New England was willing to dissolve the Union. "The charge," said he, "is unfounded. She

is much too wise to entertain such purposes. She has had too much experience, and has too strong a recollection of the blessings which the Union is capable of producing under a just administration of government.”¹ But this speech, lest it be misunderstood, he decided not to publish.

As regards the much-discussed Seventh of March speech of 1850, on the slave question, there was every advantage in a postponement of the final settlement, none in a precipitation of a conflict for which the North was unprepared even in 1861. In brief, the already dying Webster made a final endeavor to avert what, he feared, was to be a contest as inevitable as awful. He pleaded with North and with South, laid blame on both, and found excuses for both. Most of the extreme abolitionists were furious. Theodore Parker, who thought there was “not any danger of a storm”—only a decade before the Civil War—later spoke of the dead Webster as though he had been a moral suicide. Whittier wrote his famous poem “Ichabod,” beginning “How fallen, how lost;” but Wendell Phillips candidly said that Webster had been right in saying that the law required obedient citizens to return fugitive slaves. “All,” said Phillips, “who swear to support the Constitution are bound not only to submit to the return of fugitive slaves, but to aid in it, if necessary. All honor to Mr. Webster’s consistency on this point.”²

In Webster’s assertions that the fugitive-slave law must be enforced until repealed, there was nothing

¹ The Letters of Daniel Webster, from Documents owned principally by the New Hampshire Historical Society, 68.

² Review of Seventh of March speech, American Anti-Slavery Society, 1850.

new, for he had declared at Richmond, Virginia, ten years before (October 5, 1840): "I say that there is no power, direct or indirect, in Congress or the general government, to interfere in the slightest degree with the institutions of the South." What he had said at the South he had also said at the North; for he wrote "to Citizens on the Kennebec River": "Wherever there is a truly American heart, the love of the Union is entwined with its inmost fibres. It is our duty to encourage and applaud this popular feeling; to respect it ourselves, and to take care that, by no denial of justice, by no unnecessary discussion of exciting but abstract questions, by no threat or menace to interfere with what does not belong to us, we weaken that attachment to the Union which is so indispensable to the happiness of all."

Webster, like thousands of patriotic citizens, North and South, of many party names, had deplored the existence of slavery, denounced it in principle, and hoped for its ultimate extinction, while recognizing it as legally and constitutionally existing.

Far from regarding the speech as a last and presumably successful bid for the Presidency, he had foreseen the criticism it would arouse, expressing doubts whether it would not ruin him; and even declaring in words which hardly suggest a weak political device: "It seemed to me at the time that the country demanded a human victim, and I saw no reason why the victim should not be myself."¹

Time has been the saddened statesman's vindication. Ten years later, on the very eve of the great conflict of arms, the new Republican majority in Congress passed

¹ Letter to an unnamed minister, quoted in Nehemiah Adams's eulogy of Webster.

three resolutions substantially asserting the force of the fugitive-slave law as superior to contrary enactments in separate Northern States; but nevertheless the tempest burst. Now that half a century has intervened since the speech was delivered, and four decades since the guns of South Carolina fired on Fort Sumter, few historical students are inclined to blame Webster; and some, even of the old guard of "Free-Soilers," agree with President Bartlett of Webster's college, when he said, in his speech at the unveiling of a statue of Webster before the capitol of his native State, that the evolution of events had compelled blame to turn into praise, and justified the statesman's foresight and unselfishness. "The general judgment of his countrymen," wrote Senator Hoar in 1900, "first mellowing and softening into the belief which Whittier himself expressed in his later and tender poem, 'The Lost Opportunity,' seems gradually coming to the conclusion that Webster differed from the friends of freedom of his time, not in a weaker moral sense, but only in a larger and profounder prophetic vision. . . . I was one of those who, in the conceit and presumption of youth, a lover of the liberty to which he then seemed to me to be recreant, judged him severely. But I have learned better in my old age."

The Seventh of March speech was Webster's last important public appearance, save that, on July 4, 1851, he delivered the address at the laying of the corner-stone of the extension of the Capitol at Washington.

Even before the disappointments attending his failure to receive the presidential nomination, or adequate courtesy, in the Whig convention of 1852, Mr. Webster had looked longingly toward the possibility of

retirement from the stress and vexation of public life. He once remarked upon the seeming impropriety of holding a subordinate position, and receiving instructions from a younger man, after reaching the age of threescore years and ten.

Webster's
closing
years.

Various literary projects lay in his mind: a work on the Evidences of Christianity; an annotated translation of Cicero de Naturâ; a little book on the birds and fishes of Marshfield; and an extended History of Washington's Administration, in several volumes. For the last he left a fairly complete scheme. The work was "to be comprised in about fifty chapters of fifty pages each," and was, at the very beginning, to show "the sense of the country upon the importance of a united Government;" "the growing necessity, in the minds of men, of a Government which, instead of acting through the authority of the States, should act directly on individuals."

These dreams of leisure were never to be fulfilled. Prematurely old at an age when ten years of service ought to have remained to him, his great heart was sometimes strained almost to the point of breaking. The wear and tear of half a century of public life had left him no reserve of strength. In May, 1852, he was thrown from his carriage at Washington. To a Boston artist who wished to paint his portrait in the summer of that year, he said drearily that he was "all worn out." On the last 4th of July (1852) which he was to see on earth, he wrote from Washington to his son Fletcher: "I confess I grow inclined to cross the seas. I meet here so many causes of vexation and humiliation, growing out of the events connected with the convention, that I am pretty much decided and determined to leave the [State] depart-

ment early in August, and either go abroad or go into obscurity.”¹

Once again had the Whig party set aside its greatest statesman for a military “hero” and political nonentity. It was no wonder that Webster’s patience was exhausted. He had been for a quarter of a century not only the ablest Whig in the country, but the most eminent American citizen. Every consideration of fitness justified his well-known ambition for the presidency; but “availability” caused the nomination of an Indian fighter in 1840 and of two respectable but by no means commanding generals of the Mexican War in 1848 and 1852. Harrison’s nomination in 1840 Webster supported; Taylor’s, in 1848, seemed more unfit; but Scott’s, in 1852, appeared to him unendurable. At the time of the Whig nominating convention of that year Henry Clay, Webster’s great associate and rival in the councils of the Whig party, lay dying in Washington, and the field was clear for Webster; yet at no time during the fifty-three ballots did the latter receive more than thirty-two votes, while Scott started with one hundred and thirty-one, and Fillmore — then President, and ambitious for a second term — with one hundred and thirty-three. For Fillmore Mr. Webster had a sincere respect; but he felt that Scott, if elected, would be a puppet in the hands of politicians; and therefore, as a matter of principle rather than pique, advised his friends to vote for Franklin Pierce, the Democratic candidate, whose election by a great majority Webster accurately prophesied.

The friendship between Pierce and Webster had long been most cordial. On one occasion the former de-

¹ The Letters of Daniel Webster, from Documents owned principally by the New Hampshire Historical Society, 532.

clared the latter "far the greatest man that was ever born on this continent, and, I verily believe, on any continent." On the day of Pierce's own nomination for the presidency, he said that if the

Webster and
Pierce.

Whigs were to "repudiate caucuses, conventions, politicians, and tricksters, and rise in the glory of their strength and might, without waiting for any conventions to designate a candidate, but bent on placing in the presidential chair the first citizen and statesman, the first patriot and man, Daniel Webster, it would do for republican government more than any event which has taken place in the history of the world."¹ Thus did New Hampshire's only President forget all political differences in his expression of unbounded admiration for New Hampshire's greatest son.

Webster died at his country home at Marshfield, Massachusetts, October 24, 1852. Never, since the passing of Washington, was the whole country so moved. Eulogies were delivered in every part of the United States, and a considerable library of Websterian literature was called forth. His body sleeps in a rural graveyard, near the place of his death, surrounded by the remains of members of his family, and within the sound of the solemn surges of the sea.

Webster's
death.

Mr. Webster was twice married: in 1808 to Grace Fletcher, of Hopkinton, N. H., who died in 1828; and in 1829 to Caroline Bayard Le Roy, of New York, who survived him until 1882. Of his children, his son Fletcher was his father's trusted friend, secretary, and counsellor for many years, editor of his private correspondence, and surveyor of Boston from 1850 to 1861; he gave his life for the Union idea

His
family.

¹ Reminiscences of Daniel Webster, by Peter Harvey, 254.

at the second battle of Bull Run, August 29, 1862. Edward, a younger son, also fought in the field for his country, being a major in the Mexican War, and dying in the city of Mexico at the age of twenty-seven.

It is the universal testimony of all who saw Webster that his personality was at once individual and commanding. Everybody turned to look at him Webster the man. a second time. Strong and massive, with a perpetual fine reserve of demeanor, his most striking characteristics were his voice and his eyes. Many, says Edward Everett Hale, have tried to imitate his low tones, in particular, but none have succeeded; his stronger utterances were thunderous. While in college he was said to be "long, slender, pale, and all eyes." When later years had filled out the stately form of "Black Dan," and wholesome exercise bronzed his countenance, his eyes were still, in Carlyle's phrase, "dull anthracite furnaces, needing only to be blown."

An aristocrat in the only true sense, — that he was of righteous and intelligent lineage, sound education, cultured associates, and lofty purposes, — his high-mindedness extended even to a somewhat fastidious attention to dress. The blue coat with brass buttons, white or yellow waistcoat, and broad-brimmed silk hat are so well known to every American that they would be recognized as a portrait if put upon a bare pole.

One who heard him deliver his speech on nullification in Faneuil Hall, December 17, 1832, at the height of his powers, recalls him as standing on the right-hand side of the stage, dressed in black trousers and blue coat with gilt buttons. He could be distinctly heard. His gestures were numerous but vertical, — up and down, — not flowing from side to side like Edward Everett's.

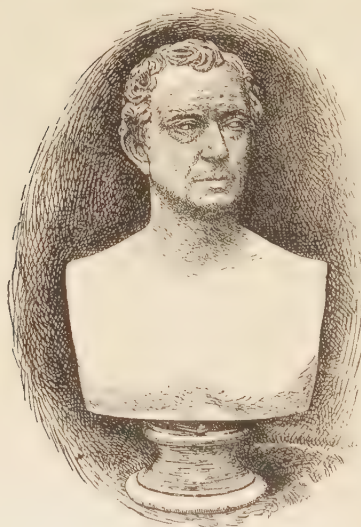
He was fond of farming and fishing, and was never happier than when at home among his country neighbors in New Hampshire or Massachusetts. Though always dignified in demeanor, he quickly made acquaintance with children and "common folks." As a husband, father, and friend, he was gentle and true. His belief in God, immortality, and the simple verities of the Christian religion was unswerving.

The adjective "Websterian" conveys a unique meaning. Choate, in his memorial address at Dartmouth, quoted approvingly an infelicitous comparison between Webster and Sir Walter Scott; and an enthusiastic member of the House of Representatives, a Mr. Stanley, once went so far as to call Shakespeare "the Webster of poets." But it is useless to press ornamental parallels or contrasts into such service, for Webster stands by himself, and the study of other names tends to emphasize his historical loneliness. There was a sombre grandeur of legitimate egotism in his words in a speech in Washington, immediately after the nomination of Scott for the presidency in 1852, when, "old," "broken," "disappointed," as his critics called him, he rolled out the words: "What I have been I am, in principle and in character, and what I am I hope to continue to be."

The influence of such a man was sure to be deep and lasting. He was the model and instructor, as well as the associate and friend, of such Massachusetts Whigs as Rufus Choate, Edward Everett, Robert C. Winthrop, and George Ticknor, — true members, by right of character, intellect, and dignity, of an American House of Lords. The term "Webster Whigs" even yet has not lost its meaning.

The personal and the intellectual force of Webster is an indivisible unit. We cannot sever the thought of

what he was from the memory of the words he uttered. He is quoted in every session of Congress as though a Supreme Court in himself. Southerners and Northerners know no difference in their citations of his authority. In discussions of Philippine policy, after the Spanish-



Edward Everett.

American war of 1898, "imperialists" and "anti-imperialists" thumbed his works in search of authoritative citations. In 1891 the Protestant Episcopal convention of South Carolina voted a memorial praying the commissioners of the Chicago Exposition not to open on Sundays: "Believing, as we do, that the Lord's Day is sanctioned by, and a part of, the common law, as asserted by Mr. Webster, we hold," etc. As Secretary Bayard remarked

on the centenary of Webster's birth, "His arguments did not merely decide cases, they settled principles."

Webster's shade may say, this very year, "I still live," not less truly than in 1852. The impression made by his personality, says Mr. Hoar, "partly accounts for the eagerness with which everything he said or did is caught up, even at second hand. In any gathering, however brilliant, the whole company pricks up its ears and listens if one of them says, 'I shook

hands with Daniel Webster,' or, 'I once heard him speak,' or, 'I saw him go by in the street.' " To Emerson, as he listened to the oration at the Bunker Hill dedication, monument and man seemed nearly synonymous; his presence would have been enough had he refrained from speech. When Webster died, it has been said, "the people felt as if the corner-stone of the Capitol had been removed; as if the elephant had died that bore the universe on its back."

"I have found politics," wrote Edward Everett in his old age, "a game of violence, duplicity, and fraud." It was inevitable, therefore, that one who, like Webster, was for forty years in "the front of ^{His faults.} life's embattled lines," should have been criticised, severely and often. He was called cold. But those who knew him best, like Peter Harvey of Boston, loved him with a Boswell-like devotion. He was declared pompous and wordy; of one of his speeches an able critic remarks that he said nothing, but he said it so magnificently that everybody was charmed. Not every orator is always on the level of Demosthenes on the Crown or Burke at the trial of Warren Hastings.

Criticism of Webster, however, chiefly centres around two points: his alleged ambition for the presidency, and his financial irresponsibility and "subservience to the money kings of State Street," Boston.

Is a desire to be a president dishonorable? Not unless it is shown in dishonorable ways. Did Webster act in such ways? The assertion that he "sold himself out" is now made chiefly by the remaining critics of the Seventh of March speech, already discussed. Shall we refuse credit for political honesty to an old man who, in that very speech, felt that he was probably committing political suicide, and who said of it, the following

year: "If I had seen the stake, if I had heard the fagots already crackling, by the blessing of Almighty God I would have gone on and discharged the duty which I thought my country called upon me to perform"?

Those who have accused Webster of undue ambition for the presidency never have charged him with the practice of a single one of the arts of the demagogue. He well knew the American people in the mass, but was utterly unable to flatter or cajole in the particular. Had he "held his ear to the ground," he would have heard the music of the spheres rather than the rumble of the next campaign.

Bacon's remark that "great empire and little minds go ill together" applies to some who have sat in the American presidential chair, but not to this man who missed the honor.

One could ask no better illustration of Webster's lifelong subordination of self to country than is given in a hitherto unpublished letter written by him to Charles Miner of Pennsylvania, August 28, 1831:—

His subordination of self to country.

"Speaking to you in the most confidential manner, I must say that I concur with you in the opinion that there is very little chance of electing Mr. Clay. I believe we may hope for the vote of Kentucky yet; but even with that, I do not perceive where we are to find enough others to make a majority. My private opinion is, there is but one chance left to save the country from farther and worse misrule, and that is to bring forward some man in whose favor the National Republicans and Anti-Masons of Pennsylvania and New York could be induced to unite, so as to secure the votes of those States. With them, Ohio, New England, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland

would be able to elect a President. But I fear there is very little prospect of finding such a candidate. A gentleman writing from Philadelphia says: 'Let us put up a candidate, if we make a change, in whom we have perfect confidence. If we fail, still a minority united on principle is a better security to the country than success in behalf of moderate talents or doubtful principles.' I agree to all this, at the same time that I see the difficulty in finding the man. I confess I do not know him.

"You are pleased to say that I possess a portion of the confidence of the conflicting parties. Perhaps it may be so, but I cannot think the country is inclined to bring me forward; and it is certain that I shall do nothing to bring myself forward. I have little experience in public affairs, and I have not been long enough before the country to produce great general confidence. My only merit is a devout attachment to the country and the constitution of Government; I am already more than paid for all my efforts if you and other good men think I have done anything to defend the Constitution and promote the welfare of the country. In the favors which those efforts have attracted towards me I see proofs of a real, substantial, fixed attachment among the people to the Constitution. The great body of the community is quite sound on that point; and that is the feeling which we ought to cultivate and on which we must rely. If we bring about a change, it will be done by us as a Union Party.

"And now, my dear sir, will you tell me whether, in your judgment, there is any individual who could so unite the Anti-Masons and National Republicans of Pennsylvania, as to carry the State against General Jackson? I should like much to know your present impressions on that vital question.

"The Anti-Masonic Convention at Baltimore will have a most responsible part to act. The prosperity of the country, perhaps the fate of the Government, hangs on their decision. God grant them true wisdom and disinterested patriotism."

As regards money matters, he was lavish in his expenditures, — burdened, like Sir Walter Scott, with a costly estate, — and hospitable as a host. During his lifetime he accepted pecuniary assistance from friends, according to a custom long prevalent in English political life, but now generally considered undesirable and dangerous. Did such assistance influence his speech or vote in any public matter? Never, as far as is known.

It may be added that it is the universal testimony of lawyers in remunerative practice that it is a financial loss to go into politics. Choate was probably thinking of Webster's reputation, rather than his bank account when he said that in his case, the lawyer did not hurt the statesman, nor the statesman the lawyer. His professional income, already large, was diminished when he entered the House of Representatives; and he lost Supreme Court practice after and because of his Reply to Hayne, though then at the zenith of his powers.

Two other charges laid against Webster's account — of drunkenness and immorality — may be dismissed until the records of a century afford any substantial proof of either.

As for Webster's final place among the orators of the world, prophecy is not indispensable. That his name suggests comparison with the greatest names, and on terms of equality, nobody will deny. Demosthenes showed a wonderful union of clear utterance and swift motion; Cicero, essentially a modern in

The final estimate.

the varied powers of his mind, and even in a certain shiftiness which reminds us now of Beaconsfield and now of Gladstone, was chief among orators in his uniform mastery of words; while Burke, in his brilliant solidity, sometimes defies analysis. But the "deep cathedral tones" of Webster, uttering the thoughts of a mind as well equipped for its work as that of any of his three great predecessors, left an impression of almost indefinite power of assertion and persuasion; so that John Adams, certainly well qualified to speak, declared as early as December 23, 1821, that his own future eulogist was a greater orator than Burke himself.

Webster took great subjects, which had long lain in his mind; used sentences previously wrought into a form which satisfied him; made jottings of heads just before he spoke; infrequently wrote out an entire speech before delivery; relied largely upon the immediate effect of a stimulating audience, but generally exercised self-restraint; let Saxon or Latin words come at will; and, in his greatest efforts, elaborately revised and rewrote after delivery.

Of his Reply to Hayne he said himself: "In one sense I had no preparation whatever, but in another sense I was fully prepared. I did not know what words I should use when I rose to my feet, nor the order of argument in which I should proceed. These came to me under the excitement of debate. But I understood the subject as well as I was capable of understanding it. I had studied it; I had often urged similar arguments before other tribunals, and in this sense of the term I was thoroughly prepared."

At its best, in its own way and for its special purposes, his style was nearly faultless. If one were to take, from the great body of his works, a single passage

as best illustrating his political creed and its manner of utterance, there might be chosen these few lines from the February 16, 1833, speech on the Constitution and the States:—

“Nullification, if successful, arrests the power of the law, absolves citizens from their duty, subverts the foundation both of protection and obedience, dispenses with oaths and obligations of allegiance, and elevates another authority to supreme command. Is not this revolution? And it raises to supreme command four-and-twenty distinct powers, each professing to be under a general government, and yet each setting its laws at defiance at pleasure. Is not this anarchy, as well as revolution? Sir, the Constitution of the United States was received as a whole, and for the whole country. If it cannot stand altogether it cannot stand in parts: and if the laws cannot be executed everywhere, they cannot long be executed anywhere.”

Here, as so often elsewhere in his best orations, appears his chief merit, a merit in which he stands unequalled among all the orators of history, — that of making the very point under discussion seem so axiomatic as to demand acceptance by every reasoning mind.

DANIEL WEBSTER

AS A MASTER OF ENGLISH STYLE¹



Daniel Webster.

By G. P. A. Healy.

FROM my own experience and observation I should **Speaking and writing.** say that

every boy who is ready enough in spelling, grammar, geography, and arithmetic, is appalled when he is commanded to write what is termed "a composition." When he enters college the same fear follows him; and the Professor of Rhetoric is a more terrible personage to his imagination than the Professors of Greek, Latin, Mathe-

matics, and Moral and Intellectual Philosophy. Both boys at school and young men in college show no lack of power in speaking their native language with a vehemence and fluency which almost stun the ears of their

¹ Abridged from the Essay by Edwin P. Whipple.

seniors. Why, then, should they find such difficulty in writing it? When you listen to the animated talk of a bright school-boy or college student, full of a subject which really interests him, you say at once that such command of racy and idiomatic English words must of course be exhibited in his "compositions" or his "themes;" but when the latter are examined, they are commonly found to be feeble and lifeless, with hardly a thought or a word which bears any stamp of freshness or originality, and are so inferior to his ordinary conversation that we can hardly believe they came from the same mind.

The first quality which strikes an examiner of these exercises in English composition is their *falseness*. No boy or youth writes what he personally thinks and feels, but writes what a good boy or youth is expected to think or feel. This hypocrisy vitiates his writing from first to last, and is not absent in his "Class Oration," or in his "Speech at Commencement."

This falseness of thought and feeling is but too apt to characterize the writing of the student after he has passed from the common school to the academy or the college. The term "Sophomorical" is used to describe speeches which are full of emotion which the speaker does not feel, full of words in four or five syllables that mean nothing, and, in respect to imagery and illustrations, blazing with the cheap jewelry of rhetoric,—with those rubies and diamonds that can be purchased for a few pennies an ounce. The danger is that this "Sophomorical" style may continue to afflict the student after he has become a clergyman, a lawyer, or a legislator.

Practical men who may not be "college educated" still have the great virtue of using the few words they

employ as identical with facts. When they meet a man who has half the dictionary at his disposal, and yet gives no evidence of apprehending the real import and meaning of one word among the many thousands he glibly pours forth, they naturally distrust him, as a person who does not know the vital connection of all good words with the real things they represent. Indeed, the best rule that a Professor of Rhetoric could adopt would be to insist that no student under his care should use an unusual word until he had *earned the right to use it* by making it the **The right use of words.**

verbal sign of some new advance in his thinking, in his acquirements, or in his feelings. Shakespeare, the greatest of English writers, and perhaps the greatest of all writers, required fifteen thousand words to embody all that his vast exceptional intelligence acquired, thought, imagined, and discovered; and he had earned the right to use every one of them. Milton found that eight thousand words could fairly and fully represent all the power, grandeur, and creativeness of his almost seraphic soul, when he attempted to express his whole nature in a literary form. All the words used by Shakespeare and Milton are *alive*; "cut them and they will *bleed*." But it is ridiculous for a college student to claim that he has the mighty resources of the English language at his supreme disposal, when he has not verified, by his own thought, knowledge, and experience, one in a hundred of the words he presumptuously employs.

Now Daniel Webster passed safely through all the stages of the "Sophomoric" disease of the mind, as he passed safely through the measles, the chicken-pox, and other eruptive maladies incident to childhood and youth. The process, however, by which he purified

his style from this taint, and made his diction at last as robust and as manly, as simple and as majestic, as the nature it expressed, will reward a little study.

The mature style of Webster is perfect of its kind, being in words the express image of his mind and character, — plain, terse, clear, forcible; and rising from the level of lucid statement and argument into passages of superlative eloquence only when his whole nature is stirred by some grand sentiment of freedom, patriotism, justice, humanity, or religion, which absolutely lifts him, by its own inherent force and inspiration, to a region above that in which his mind habitually lives and moves. At the same time it will be observed that these thrilling passages, which the boys of two generations have ever been delighted to declaim in their shrillest tones, are strictly illustrative of the main purpose of the speech in which they appear. They are not mere purple patches of rhetoric, loosely stitched on the homespun gray of the reasoning, but they seem to be inwoven with it and to be a vital part of it. Indeed we can hardly decide, in reading these magnificent bursts of eloquence in connection with what precedes and follows them, whether the effect is due to the logic of the orator becoming suddenly morally impassioned, or to his moral passion becoming suddenly logical. What gave Webster his immense influence over the opinions of the people of New England was, first, his power of so “putting things” that everybody could understand his statements; secondly, his power of so framing his arguments that all the steps, from one point to another, in a logical series, could be clearly apprehended by every intelligent farmer or mechanic who had a thoughtful interest in the affairs

“The style is
the man.”

Webster's
clearness,
logic, and
patriotism.

of the country; and thirdly, his power of inflaming the sentiment of patriotism in all honest and well-intentioned men by overwhelming appeals to that sentiment, so that, after convincing their understandings, he clinched the matter by sweeping away their wills.

Perhaps to these sources of influence may be added another which many eminent statesmen have lacked. With all his great superiority to average men in force and breadth of mind, he had a His respect
for the aver-
age man. genuine respect for the intellect, as well as for the manhood, of average men. He disdained the ignoble office of misleading the voters he aimed to instruct; and the farmers and mechanics who read his speeches felt ennobled when they found that the greatest statesman of the country frankly addressed them, as man to man, without pluming himself on his exceptional talents and accomplishments. Up to the crisis of 1850, he succeeded in domesticating himself at most of the pious, moral, and intelligent firesides of New England. Through his speeches he seemed to be almost bodily present wherever the family, gathered in the evening around the blazing hearth, discussed the questions of the day. It was not the great Mr. Webster, "the godlike Daniel," who had a seat by the fire. It was a person who talked *to* them, and argued *with* them, as though he was "one of the folks," -- a neighbor dropping in to make an evening call; there was not the slightest trace of assumption in his manner; but suddenly, after the discussion had become a little tiresome, certain fiery words would leap from his lips and make the whole household spring to their feet, ready to sacrifice life and property for "the Constitution and the Union." That Webster was thus a kind of invisible presence in thousands of homes where his face was

never seen, shows that his rhetoric had caught an element of power from his early recollections of the independent, hard-headed farmers whom he met when a boy in his father's house. The bodies of these men had become tough and strong in their constant struggle to force scanty harvests from an unfruitful soil, which only persistent toil could compel to yield anything; and their brains, though forcible and clear, were still not stored with the important facts and principles which it was his delight to state and expound. In truth, he ran a race with the demagogues of his time in an attempt to capture such men as these, thinking them the very backbone of the country. Whether he succeeded or failed, it would be vain to hunt through his works to find a single epithet in which he mentioned them with contempt. He was as incapable of insulting one member of this landed democracy — sterile as most of their acres were — as of insulting the memory of his father, who belonged to this class.

It was fortunate that Webster, after he was admitted to the bar, came into constant collision, in the courts of New Hampshire, with one of the greatest masters of the common law that the country has ever produced, Jeremiah Mason. It has been said that Mr. Mason educated Webster into a lawyer by opposing him. He did more than this; he cured Webster of all the florid foolery of his early rhetorical style. Of all men that ever appeared before a jury, Mason was the most pitiless realist, the most terrible enemy of what is — in a slang term as vile almost as itself — called “Hifalutin;” and woe to the opposing lawyer who indulged in it! He relentlessly pricked all rhetorical bubbles, reducing them at once to the small amount of ignominious suds which the orator's breath

had converted into colored globes, having some appearance of stability as well as splendor. Six feet and seven inches high, and corpulent in proportion, this inexorable representative of good sense and sound law stood, while he was arguing a case, "quite near to the jury," says Webster, — "so near that he might have laid his finger on the foreman's nose; and then he talked to them in a plain conversational way, in short sentences, and using no word that was not level to the comprehension of the least educated man on the panel. This led me," he adds, "to examine my own style, and I set about reforming it altogether."

It may be said that Webster's argument in the celebrated "Dartmouth College Case," before the Supreme Court of the United States, placed him, at the age of thirty-six, in the foremost rank of the constitutional lawyers of the country. For the main points of the reasoning, and for the exhaustive citation of authorities by which the reasoning was sustained, he was probably indebted to Mason, who had previously argued the case before the Superior Court of New Hampshire; but his superiority to Mason was shown in the eloquence, the moral power, he infused into his reasoning, so as to make the dullest citation of legal authority *tell* on the minds he addressed.

Webster's extreme solicitude to make his style thoroughly *Websterian* — a style unimitated because it is in itself inimitable — is observable in the care he took in revising all his speeches and addresses which were published under his own authority. His great Plymouth oration of 1820 did not appear in pamphlet form until a year after its delivery. The chief reason of this delay was probably due to his desire of stating the main political idea of

The "Websterian style."

the oration, that government is founded on property, so clearly that it could not be misconceived by any honest mind, and could only be perverted from its plain democratic meaning by the ingenious malignity of such minds as are deliberately dishonest, and consider lying as justifiable when lying will serve a party purpose. It

A pregnant sentence. is probable that Webster would have been President of the United States had it not

been for one short sentence in this oration, — "Government is founded on property." It was of no use for his political friends to prove that he founded on this general proposition the most democratic views as to the distribution of property, and advised the enactment of laws calculated to frustrate the accumulation of large fortunes in a few hands. There were the words, words horrible to the democratic imagination, and Webster was proclaimed an aristocrat, and an enemy to the common people. But the delay in the publication of the oration may also be supposed to have been due to his desire to prune all its grand passages of eloquence of every epithet and image which should not be rigorously exact as expressions of his genuine sentiments and principles. It is probable that the Plymouth

The Plymouth oration. oration, as we possess it in print, is a better oration, in respect to composition, than that which was heard by the applauding crowd before which it was originally delivered. It is certain that the largeness, the grandeur, the weight of Webster's whole nature, were first made manifest to the intelligent portion of his countrymen by this noble commemorative address.

Yet it is also certain that he was not himself altogether satisfied with this oration; and his dissatisfaction with some succeeding popular speeches, memorable in the annals of American eloquence, was expressed privately

to his friends in the most emphatic terms. On the day he completed his magnificent Bunker Hill oration, delivered on the 17th of June, 1825, he wrote to Mr. George Ticknor: "I did the deed this morning, *i. e.* I finished my speech; and I am pretty well persuaded that it will *finish* me as far as reputation is concerned. There is no more tone in it than in the weather in which it has been written; it is perpetual dissolution and thaw." Every critic will understand the force of that word "tone." He seemed to feel that it had not enough robust manliness, — that the ribs and backbone, the facts, thoughts, and real substance of the address, were not sufficiently prominent, owing to the frequency of those outbursts of magnetic eloquence which made the immense audience that listened to it half crazy with the vehemence of their applause. On the morning after he had delivered his eulogy on Adams and Jefferson, he entered his office with his manuscript in his hand, and threw it down on the desk of a young student at law whom he specially esteemed, with the request, "There, Tom, please to take that discourse, and weed out all the Latin words."

**The first
Bunker Hill
oration.**

**The Adams
and Jefferson
eulogy.**

Webster's liking for the Saxon element of our composite language was, however, subordinate to his main purpose of self-expression. Every word was good, whether of Saxon or Latin derivation, which aided him to embody the mood of mind dominant at the time he was speaking or writing. No man had less of what has been called "the ceremonial cleanliness of academical pharisees;" and the purity of expression he aimed at was to put into a form at once intelligible and tasteful his exact thoughts and emotions. He tormented reporters, proof-

**The Saxon
element in
Webster's
English.**

readers, and the printers who had the misfortune to be engaged in putting one of his performances into type, not because this or that word was or was not Saxon or Latin, but because it was inadequate to convey perfectly his meaning.

Wherever the Latin element in our language comes in to express ideas and sentiments which were absent from the Anglo-Saxon mind, Webster uses it without stint; and some of the most resounding passages of his eloquence owe to it their strange power to suggest a certain vastness in his intellect and sensibility, which the quaint, idiomatic, homely prose of his friend Mason would have been utterly incompetent to convey. Still, he preferred a plain, plump, simple verb or noun to any learned phrase, whenever he could employ it without limiting his opulent nature to a meagre vocabulary, incompetent fully to express it.

Yet he never departed from simplicity; that is, he rigidly confined himself to the use of such words as he had earned the right to use. Whenever the report of one of his extemporaneous speeches came before him for revision, he had an instinctive sagacity in detecting every word that had slipped unguardedly from his tongue, which he felt, on reflection, did not belong to *him*. Among the reporters of his speeches, he had a particular esteem for Henry J. Raymond, afterwards so well known as the editor of the "New York Times." Mr. Raymond told me that, after he had made a report of one of Webster's speeches, and had presented it to him for revision, his conversation with him was always a lesson in rhetoric. "Did I use that phrase? I hope not. At any rate, substitute for it this more accurate definition." And then again: "That word does not express my meaning. Wait a

**The Latin
element.**

**Revision of
his speeches.**

moment, and I will give you a better one. That sentence is slovenly, — that image is imperfect and confused. I believe, my young friend, that you have a remarkable power of reporting what I say; but if I said that, and that, and that, it must have been owing to the fact that I caught, in the hurry of the moment, such expressions as I could command at the moment; and you see they do not accurately represent the idea that was in my mind.” And thus, Mr. Raymond said, the orator’s criticism upon his own speech would go on, — correction following correction, — until the reporter feared he would not have it ready for the morning edition of his journal.

Webster had so much confidence in Raymond’s power of reporting him accurately, that, when he intended to make an important speech in the Senate, he would send a note to him, asking him to come to Washington as a personal favor; for he knew that the accomplished editor had a rare power of apprehending a long train of reasoning, and of so reporting it that the separate thoughts would not only be exactly stated, but the relations of the thoughts to each other — a much more difficult task — would be preserved throughout, and that the argument would be presented in the symmetrical form in which it existed in the speaker’s mind. Then would follow, as of old, the severe scrutiny of the phraseology of the speech; and Webster would give, as of old, a new lesson in rhetoric to the accomplished reporter who was so capable of following the processes of his mind.

Webster laid great emphasis on conversation as one of the most important sources of imagery as well as of positive knowledge. “In my education,” he once remarked to Charles Sumner, “I have found that con-

versation with the intelligent men I have had the good fortune to meet has done more for me than books ever did; for I learn more from them in a talk of half an hour than I could possibly learn from their books. Their minds, in conversation, come into intimate contact with my own mind; and I absorb certain secrets of their power, whatever may be its quality, which I could not have detected in their works. Converse, *converse*, CONVERSE with living men, face to face, and mind to mind,—that is one of the best sources of knowledge.”

The advantage of conversation.

But my present object is simply to give what may be called the natural history of metaphor, comparison, image, trope, and the like, whether imagery be employed by an uneducated husbandman or by a great orator and writer. Many readers may recollect the anecdote of the New Hampshire farmer who was once complimented on the extremely handsome appearance of a horse which he was somewhat sullenly urging on to perform its work. “Yaas,” was the churlish reply, “the critter looks well enough, but then he is as slow as — as — as — well, as slow as cold molasses.” This perfectly answers to Bacon’s definition of imagination, as “thought immersed in matter.” The comparison is exactly on a level with the experience of the person who used it. He had seen his good wife, on so many bitter winter mornings, when he was eager for his breakfast, turn the molasses-jug upside down, and had noted so often the reluctance of the congealed sweetness to assume its liquid nature, that the thing had become to him the visible image of the abstract notion of slowness of movement. An imaginative dramatist or novelist, priding himself on the exactness with which he represented character, could not have invented a more

appropriate comparison to be put into the mouth of an imagined New England farmer.

Let us pass to an imagination which is, perhaps, the grandest in American oratory, but which was as perfectly natural as that of the "cold molasses," or "God's flat-iron" of the New England farmer, — as natural, indeed, as the "sky-blue, God's color," of the New England boy. Daniel Webster, standing on the heights of Quebec at an early hour of a summer morning, heard the ordinary morning drum-beat which called the garrison to their duty. Knowing that the British possessions belted the globe, the thought occurred to him that the morning drum would go on beating in some English post to the time when it would sound again in Quebec. Afterwards, in a speech on President Jackson's Protest, he dwelt on the fact that our Revolutionary forefathers engaged in a war with Great Britain on a strict question of principle, "while actual suffering was still afar off." How could he give most effect to this statement? It would have been easy for him to have presented statistical tables, showing the wealth, population, and resources of England, followed by an enumeration of her colonies and military stations, all going to prove the enormous strength of the nation against which the United American colonies raised their improvised flag. But the thought which had heretofore occurred to him at Quebec happily recurred to his mind the moment it was needed; and he flashed on the imagination an image of British power which no statistics could have conveyed to the understanding, — "a Power," he said, "which has dotted over the surface of the whole globe with her possessions and military posts, whose morning drum-beat, following the sun, and keeping company

The coining
of a famous
phrase.

with the hours, circles the earth with one continuous and unbroken strain of the martial airs of England." Perhaps a mere rhetorician might consider superfluous the word "whole," as applied to "globe," and "unbroken," as following "continuous;" yet they really



Edmund Burke.

add to the force and majesty of the expression.

It is curious that, in Great Britain, this magnificent impersonation of the power of England is so little known. It is certain that it is unrivalled in British patriotic oratory. Not Chatham, not even Burke, ever approached it in the noblest passages in which they celebrated the greatness and glory of their country. Webster, it is to be noted, introduced it in his speech, not

for the purpose of exalting England, but of exalting our Revolutionary forefathers, whose victory, after a seven years' war of terrible severity, waged in vindication of a principle, was made all the more glorious from having been won over an adversary so formidable and so vast.

This celebrated image of the British "drum-beat" is here cited simply to indicate the natural way in which all the faculties of Webster are brought into harmonious co-operation, whenever he seriously discusses any great question. His understanding and imagination, when both are roused into action, always cordially join hands. His state-

**Webster's
understand-
ing and
imagination.**

ment of facts is so combined with the argument founded on them that they are interchangeable; his statement having the force of argument, and his argument having the "substantiality" which properly belongs to statement; and to these he commonly adds an imaginative illustration, which gives increased reality to both statement and argument. In rapidly turning over the leaves of his Works, one can easily find numerous instances of this instinctive operation of his mind. In his first Bunker Hill oration he announces that "the *principle* of free governments adheres to the American soil. It is bedded in it, immovable as its mountains." Again he says: "A call for the representative system, wherever it is not enjoyed, and where there is already intelligence enough to estimate its value, is perseveringly made. Where men may speak out, they demand it; where the bayonet is at their throats, they pray for it." And yet again: "If the true spark of religious and civil liberty be kindled, it will burn. Human agency cannot extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire, it may be smothered for a time; the ocean may overwhelm it; mountains may press it down; but its inherent and unconquerable force will heave both the ocean and the land, and at some time or other, in some place or other, the volcano will break out, and flame up to heaven. It would be difficult to find in any European literature a similar embodiment of an elemental sentiment of humanity, in an image which is as elemental as the sentiment to which it gives vivid expression.

And then with what majesty, with what energy, and with what simplicity can he denounce a political transaction which, had it not attracted his ire, would hardly have survived in the memory of his countrymen! Thus,

in his Protest against Mr. Benton's Expunging Resolution, speaking for himself and his senatorial colleague, he says : " We rescue our own names, character, and honor from all participation in this matter; and, whatever the wayward character of the times, the headlong and plunging spirit of party devotion, or the fear or the love of power, may have been able to bring about elsewhere, we desire to thank God that they have not, as yet, overcome the love of liberty, fidelity to true republican principles, and a sacred regard for the Constitution in that State whose soil was drenched to a mire by the first and best blood of the Revolution." Perhaps the peculiar power of Webster in condemning a measure by a felicitous epithet, such as that he employs in describing "the *plunging* spirit of party devotion," was never more happily exercised. In that word "plunging" he intended to condense all his horror and hatred of a transaction which he supposed calculated to throw the true principles of constitutional government into a bottomless abyss of personal government, where right constitutional principles would cease to have existence as well as cease to have authority.

There is one passage in his oration at the completion of the Bunker Hill Monument, which may be quoted

**Power of
compact
statement.**

as an illustration of his power of compact statement, and which, at the same time, may save readers from the trouble of reading many excellent histories of the origin and progress of the Spanish dominion in America, condensing, as it does, all which such histories can tell us in a few smiting sentences. "Spain," he says, "stooped on South America, like a vulture on its prey. Everything was force. Territories were acquired by fire and sword. Cities were destroyed by fire and sword. Hundreds

of thousands of human beings fell by fire and sword. Even conversion to Christianity was attempted by fire and sword." One is reminded, in this passage, of Macaulay's method of giving vividness to his confident generalization of facts by emphatic repetitions of the same form of words. The repetition of "fire and sword," in this series of short, sharp sentences, ends in forcing the reality of what the words mean on the dulllest imagination; and the climax is capped by affirming that "fire and sword" were the means by which the religion of peace was recommended to idolaters, whose heathenism was more benignant, and more intrinsically Christian, than the military Christianity which was forced upon them.

And then, again, how easily Webster's imagination slips in, at the end of a comparatively bald enumeration of the benefits of a good government, to vitalize the statements of his understanding! "Everywhere," he says, "there is order, everywhere there is security. Everywhere the law reaches to the highest, and reaches to the lowest, to protect all in their rights, and to restrain all from wrong; and over all hovers liberty, — that liberty for which our fathers fought and fell on this very spot, with her eye ever watchful, and her eagle wing ever wide outspread." There is something astonishing in the dignity given in the last clause of this sentence to the American eagle, — a bird so degraded by the rhodomontade of fifth-rate declaimers that it seemed impossible that the highest genius and patriotism could restore it to its primacy among the inhabitants of the air, and its just eminence as a symbol of American liberty. It is also to be noted that Webster here alludes to "the bird of freedom" only as it appears on the American silver dollar that passes daily

from hand to hand, where the watchful eye and the outspread wing are so inartistically represented that the critic is puzzled to account for the grandeur of the image which the orator contrived to evolve from the barbaric picture on the ugliest and clumsiest of civilized coins.

The compactness of Webster's statements occasionally reminds us of the epigrammatic point which characterizes so many of the statements of Burke. Thus, in presenting a memorial to Congress, signed by many prominent men of business, against President Jackson's system of finance, he saw at once that the Democrats would denounce it as another manifesto of the "moneyed aristocracy." Accordingly Webster introduced the paper to the attention of the Senate, with the preliminary remark: "The memorialists are not unaware that, if rights are attacked, attempts will be made to render odious those whose rights are violated. Power always seeks such subjects on which to try its experiments." It is difficult to resist the impression that Webster must have been indebted to Burke for this maxim. Again, we are deluded into the belief that we must be reading Burke, when Webster refers to the *minimum* principle as the right one to be followed in imposing duties on certain manufactures. "It lays the impost," he says, "exactly where it will do good, and leaves the rest free. It is an intelligent, discerning, discriminating principle; not a blind, headlong, generalizing, uncalculating operation. Simplicity, undoubtedly, is a great beauty in acts of legislation, as well as in the works of art; but in both it must be a simplicity resulting from congruity of parts and adaptation to the end designed; not a rude generalization, which either leaves the particular object unaccomplished, or, in accomplishing it,

accomplishes a dozen others also, which were not desired. It is a simplicity wrought out by knowledge and skill; not the rough product of an undistinguishing, sweeping general principle."

An ingenuous reader, who has not learned from his historical studies that men generally act, not from arguments addressed to their understandings, but from vehement appeals which rouse their passions to defend their seeming interests, cannot comprehend why Webster's arguments against Nullification and Secession, which were apparently unanswerable, and which were certainly unanswered either by Hayne or Calhoun, should not have settled the question in debate between the North and the South. Such a reader, after patiently following all the turns and twists of the logic, all the processes of the reasoning employed on both sides of the intellectual contest, would naturally conclude that the party defeated in the conflict would gracefully acknowledge the fact of its defeat; and, as human beings, gifted with the faculty of reason, would cheerfully admit the demonstrated results of its exercise. He would find it difficult to comprehend why the men who were overcome in a fair gladiatorial strife in the open arena of debate, with brain pitted against brain, and manhood against manhood, should resort to the rough logic of "blood and iron," when the nobler kind of logic, that which is developed in the struggle of mind with mind, had failed to accomplish the purposes which their hearts and wills, independent of their understandings, were bent on accomplishing.

It may be considered certain that so wise a statesman as Webster — a statesman whose foresight was so palpably the consequence of his insight, and whose piercing intellect was so admirably adapted to read events

in their principles — never indulged in such illusions as those which cheered so many of his own adherents, when they supposed his triumph in argumentation was to settle a matter which was really based on organic differences in the institutions of the two sections of the Union. He knew perfectly well that, while the Webster men were glorying in his victory over Calhoun, the Calhoun men were equally jubilant in celebrating Calhoun's victory over him. Which of them had the better in the argument was of little importance in comparison with the terrible fact that the people of the Southern States were widening, year by year, the distance which separated them from the people of the Northern States. We have no means of judging whether Webster clearly foresaw the frightful civil war between the two sections, which followed so soon after his own death. We only know that to him it was a conflict constantly impending, and which could be averted for the time only by compromises, concessions, and other temporary expedients. If he allowed his mind to pass from the pressing questions of the hour, and to consider the radical division between the two sections of the country which were only formally united, it would seem that he must have felt, as long as the institution of negro slavery existed, that he was only laboring to postpone a conflict which it was impossible for him to prevent.

A great test of the sincerity of a statesman's style is his moderation. Now, if we take the whole body of

Moderation. Mr. Webster's speeches, whether delivered in the Senate or before popular assemblies, during the period of his opposition to President Jackson's administration, we may well be surprised at their moderation of tone and statement. Everybody old

enough to recollect the singular virulence of political speech at that period must remember it as disgraceful equally to the national conscience and the national understanding. The spirit of party, always sufficiently fierce and unreasonable, was then stimulated into a fury resembling madness. Almost every speaker, Democrat or Whig, was in that state of passion which is represented by the physical sign of "foaming at the mouth." Few mouths then opened that did not immediately begin to "foam." So many fortunes were suddenly wrecked by President Jackson's financial policy, and the business of the country was so disastrously disturbed, that, whether the policy was right or wrong, those who assailed and those who defended it seemed to be equally devoid of common intellectual honesty. "I do well to be angry," appears to have been the maxim which inspired Democratic and Whig orators alike; and what reason there was on either side was submerged in the lies and libels, in the calumnies and caricatures, in the defamations and execrations, which accompanied the citation of facts and the affirmation of principles. Webster, during all this time, was selected as a shining mark, at which every puny writer or speaker who opposed him hurled his small or large contribution of verbal rotten eggs; and yet Webster was almost the only Whig statesman who preserved sanity of understanding during the whole progress of that political riot, in which the passions of men became the masters of their understandings. Pious Whig fathers, who worshipped the "godlike Daniel," went almost to the extent of teaching their children to curse Jackson in their prayers; equally pious Democratic fathers brought up their sons and daughters to anathematize the fiend-like Daniel as the enemy of human

rights; and yet, in reading Webster's speeches, covering the whole space between 1832 and 1836, we can hardly find a statement which an historian of our day would not admit as a candid generalization of facts, or an argument which would not stand the test of logical examination. Such an historian might entirely disagree with the opinions of Webster; but he would certainly award to him the praise of being an honest reasoner and an honest rhetorician, in a time when reason was used merely as a tool of party passion, and when rhetoric rushed madly into the worst excesses of rhodomontade.

It is also to be said that Webster rarely indulged in personalities. When we consider how great were his powers of sarcasm and invective, how constant were the provocations to exercise them furnished by his political enemies, and how atrociously and meanly allusions to his private affairs were brought into discussions which should have been confined to refuting his reasoning, his moderation in this matter is to be ranked as a great virtue.

It is almost pathetic to remember that, when Mr. Everett undertook to edit, in 1851, the standard edition of his works, Webster gave directions to expunge all personalities from his speeches, even when those personalities were the just punishment of unprovoked attacks on his integrity as a man. Readers will look in vain, in this edition of his works, for some of the most pungent passages which originally attracted their attention in the first report of the Defence of the Treaty of Washington. At the time these directions were given, Webster was himself the object of innumerable personalities, which were the natural, the inevitable results of his speech of the 7th of March, 1850.

It seems to be a law, that the fame of all public men shall be "half dis fame." We are specially warned to beware of the man of whom all men speak well. Burke, complimenting his friend Fox for risking everything, even his "darling popularity," on the success of the East India Bill, nobly says: "He is traduced and abused for his supposed motives. He will remember that obloquy is a necessary ingredient in all true glory; he will remember that it was not only in the Roman customs, but it is in the nature of human things, that calumny and abuse are essential parts of triumph."

Great writers and orators are commonly economists in the use of words. They compel common words to bear a burden of thought and emotion, which mere rhetoricians, with all the resources of the language at their disposal, would never dream of imposing upon them. But it is also to be observed, that some writers have the power of giving a new and special significance to a common word, by impressing on it a wealth of meaning which it cannot claim for itself. Three obvious examples of this peculiar power may be cited. Among poets, Chaucer infused into the simple word "green" a poetic ecstasy which no succeeding English poet, not even Wordsworth, has ever rivalled, in describing an English landscape in the month of May. Jonathan Edwards fixed upon the term "sweetness" as best conveying his loftiest conception of the bliss which the soul of the saint can attain to on earth, or expect to be blessed with in heaven; but not one of his theological successors has ever caught the secret of using "sweetness" in the sense attached to it by him. Dr. Barrow gave to the word "rest," as embodying his idea of the spiritual repose of the soul fit for heaven, a significance which it bears

Great orators
economists
in the use of
words.

in the works of no other great English divine. To descend a little, Webster was fond of certain words, commonplace enough in themselves, to which he insisted on imparting a more than ordinary import. Two of these, which meet us continually in reading his speeches, are "interesting" and "respectable." The first of these appears to him competent to express that rapture of attention called forth by a thing, an event, or a person, which other writers convey by such a term as "absorbing," or its numerous equivalents. If we should select one passage from his works which, more

Webster's
power of
seeing and
feeling.

than any other, indicates his power of seeing and feeling, through a process of purely imaginative vision and sympathy, it is that portion of his Plymouth oration where he places himself and his audience as spectators on the barren shore, when the *Monitor* came into view. He speaks of "the ~~interesting~~ group upon the deck" of the little vessel. The very word suggests that we are to have a very commonplace account of the landing, and the circumstances which followed it. In an instant, however, we are made to "feel the cold which benumbed, and listen to the winds which pierced" this "interesting" group; and immediately after, the picture is flashed upon the imagination of "chilled and shivering childhood, homeless but for a mother's arms, couchless but for a mother's breast,"—an image which shows that the orator had not only transported himself into a spectator of the scene, but had felt his own blood "almost freeze" in intense sympathy with the physical sufferings of the shelterless mothers and children.

There is no word which the novelists, satirists, philanthropic reformers, and Bohemians of our day have done so much to discredit, and make dis-respect-

able to the heart and the imagination, as the word "respectable." Webster always uses it as a term of eulogy. A respectable man is, to his mind, a person who performs all his duties to his family, his country, and his God; a person who is not only virtuous, but who has a clear perception of the relation which connects one virtue with another by "the golden thread" of moderation, and who, whether he be a man of genius, or a business man of average talent, or an intelligent mechanic, or a farmer of sound moral and mental character, is to be considered "respectable" because he is one of those citizens whose intelligence and integrity constitute the foundation on which the Republic rests. As late as 1843, in his noble oration on the completion of the Bunker Hill Monument, he declared that if our American institutions had done nothing more than to produce the character of Washington, that alone would entitle them to the respect of mankind. "Washington is all our own! . . . I would cheerfully put the question to-day to the intelligence of Europe and the world, what character of the century, upon the whole, stands out in the relief of history, most pure, most *respectable*, most sublime; and I doubt not, that, by a suffrage approaching to unanimity, the answer would be Washington!" It is needless to quote other instances of the peculiar meaning he put into the word "respectable," when we thus find him challenging the Europe of the eighteenth century to name a match for Washington, and placing "most respectable" after "most pure," and immediately preceding "most sublime," in his enumeration of the three qualities in which Washington surpassed all men of his century.

It has been often remarked that Webster adapted his style, even his habits of mind and modes of reasoning,

to the particular auditors he desired to influence; but that, whether he addressed an unorganized crowd of people, or a jury, or a bench of judges, or the Senate of the United States, he ever proved himself an orator of the first class. His admirers commonly confine themselves to the admirable sagacity with which he discriminated between the kind of reasoning proper to be employed when he addressed courts and juries, and the kind of reasoning which is most effective in a legislative assembly. The lawyer and the statesman were, in Webster, kept distinct, except so far as he was a lawyer who had argued before the Supreme Court questions of constitutional law. An amusing instance of this abnegation of the lawyer, while incidentally bringing in a lawyer's knowledge of judicial decisions, occurs in a little episode in his debate with Mr. Calhoun, in 1849, as to the relation of Congress to the Territories. Mr. Calhoun said that he had been told that the Supreme Court of the United States had decided, in *one* case, that the Constitution did not extend to the Territories, but that he was "incredulous of the fact." "Oh!" replied Mr. Webster, "I can remove the gentleman's incredulity very easily, for I can assure him that the same thing has been decided by the United States courts over and over again for the last thirty years." It will be observed, however, that Mr. Webster, after communicating this important item of information, proceeded to discuss the question as if the Supreme Court had no existence, and bases his argument on the plain terms of the Constitution, and the plain facts recorded in the history of the government established by it.

He was a great lawyer; but as a legislator the precedents of the lawyer did not control the action or

Adaptation
of style to
audience.

supersede the principles of the statesman. He was one of the most formidable debaters that ever appeared in a legislative assembly; and yet those who most resolutely grappled with him in the duel of debate would be the last to impute to him inaccuracy of knowledge or shallowness of thought. He carried into the Senate of the United States a trained mind, disciplined by the sternest culture of his faculties, disdaining any plaudits which were not the honest reward of robust reasoning on generalized facts, and "gravitating" in the direction of truth, whether he hit or missed it. In his case, at least, there was nothing in his legal experience, or in his legislative experience, which would have unfitted him for producing a work on the science of politics. The best speeches in the House of Commons of Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell appear very weak indeed, as compared with the Reply to Hayne, or the speech on "The Constitution not a Compact between Sovereign States," or the speech on the President's Protest.

Lawyer,
legislator,
and states-
man.

In this connection it may be said, when we remember the hot contests between the two men, that there is something plaintive in Calhoun's dying testimony to Webster's austere intellectual conscientiousness. Mr. Venables, who attended the South Carolina statesman in his dying hours, wrote to Webster: "When your name was mentioned he remarked that 'Mr. Webster has as high a standard of truth as any statesman I have met in debate. Convince him, and he cannot reply; he is silenced; he cannot look truth in the face and oppose it by argument. I think that it can [could] be readily perceived by his manner when he felt the unanswerable force of a reply.'

Intellectual
conscientious-
ness.

He often spoke of you in my presence, and always kindly and most respectfully." Now it must be considered that, in debate, the minds of Webster and Calhoun had come into actual contact and collision. Each really felt the force of the other. An ordinary duel might be ranked among idle pastimes when compared with the stress and strain and pain of their encounters in the duel of debate. A sword-cut or pistol-bullet, maiming the body, was as nothing in comparison with the wounds they mutually inflicted on that substance which was immortal in both. It was a duel, or series of duels, in which mind was opposed to mind, and will to will, and where the object appeared to be to inflict moral and mental annihilation on one of the combatants. There never passed a word between them on which the most ingenious Southern jurists, in their interpretations of the "code" of honor, could have found matter for a personal quarrel; and yet these two proud and strong personalities knew that they were engaged in a mortal contest, in which neither gave quarter nor expected quarter. Mr. Calhoun's intellectual egotism was as great as his intellectual ability. He always supposed that he was the victor in every close logical wrestle with any mind to which his own was opposed. He never wrestled with a mind, until he met Webster's, which in tenacity, grasp, and power was a match for his own. He, of course, thought his antagonist was beaten by his superior strength and amplitude of argumentation; but it is still to be noted that he, the most redoubtable opponent that Webster ever encountered, testified, though in equivocal terms, to Webster's intellectual honesty. When he crept, half dead, into the Senate-Chamber to hear Webster's speech of the 7th of March, 1850, he objected emphati-

cally at the end to Webster's declaration that the Union could not be dissolved. After declaring that Calhoun's supposed case of justifiable resistance came within the definition of the ultimate right of revolution, which is lodged in all oppressed communities, Webster added that he did not at that time wish to go into a discussion of the nature of the United States government. "The honorable gentleman and myself," he said, "have broken lances sufficiently often before on that subject." "I have no desire to do it now," replied Calhoun; and Webster blandly retorted, "I presume the gentleman has not, and I have quite as little." One is reminded here of Dr. Johnson's remark, when he was stretched on a sick-bed, with his gladiatorial powers of argument suspended by physical exhaustion. "If that fellow Burke were now present," the Doctor humorously murmured, "he would certainly kill me."

But to Webster's eminence as a lawyer and a statesman, it is proper to add, that he has never been excelled as a writer of state papers among the public men of the United States. Mr. Emerson has a phrase which is exactly applicable to these efforts of Webster's mind. That phrase is, "superb propriety." Throughout his despatches he always seems to feel that he impersonates his country; and the gravity and weight of his style are as admirable as its simplicity and majestic ease. "Daniel Webster, his mark," is indelibly stamped on them all. When the Treaty of Washington was criticised by the Whigs in the English Parliament, Macaulay specially noticed the difference in the style of the two negotiators. Lord Ashburton, he said, had compromised the honor of his country by "the humble, caressing, wheedling tone" of his letters, a tone which

Webster as
a writer of
state papers.

Macaulay on
Webster's
manner.

contrasted strangely with "the firm, resolute, vigilant, and unyielding manner" of the American Secretary of State. It is to be noticed that no other opponent of Sir Robert Peel's administration, not even Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell, struck at the essential weakness of Lord Ashburton's despatches with the force and sagacity which characterized Macaulay's assault on the treaty. Indeed, a rhetorician and critic less skilful than Macaulay can easily detect that "America" is represented fully in Webster's despatches, while "Britannia" has a very amiable, but not very forcible, representative in Lord Ashburton. Had Palmerston been the British plenipotentiary, we can easily imagine how different would have been the task imposed on Webster. As the American Secretary was generally in the right in every position he assumed, he would probably have triumphed even over Palmerston; but the letters of the "pluckiest" of English statesmen would, we may be sure, have never been criticised in the House of Commons as "humble, wheedling, and caressing."

In addition, however, to his legal arguments, his senatorial speeches, and his state papers, Webster is to be considered as the greatest orator our country has produced in his addresses before miscellaneous assemblages of the people. In saying this we do not confine the remark to such noble orations as those on the "First Settlement of New England," "The Bunker Hill Monument," and "Adams and Jefferson," but extend it so as to include speeches before great masses of people who could be hardly distinguished from a mob, and who were under no restraint but that imposed by their own self-respect and their respect for the orator. On these occasions he was

Webster as
a popular
orator.

uniformly successful. It is impossible to detect, in any reports of these popular addresses, that he ever stooped to employ a style of speech or mode of argument commonly supposed appropriate to a speaker on the "stump;" and yet he was the greatest "stump" orator that our country has ever seen. He seemed to delight in addressing five, or ten, or even twenty thousand people, in the open air, trusting that the penetrating tones of his voice would reach even the ears of those who were on the ragged edges of the swaying crowd before him; and he would thus speak to the sovereign people, in their unorganized state as a collection of uneasy and somewhat belligerent individuals, with a dignity and majesty similar to the dignity and majesty which characterized his arguments before the Senate of the United States, or before a bench of judges. A large portion of his published works consist of such speeches, and they rank only second among the remarkable productions of his mind.

The question arises, How could he hold the attention of such audiences without condescending to flatter their prejudices, or without occasionally acting the part of the sophist and the buffoon? Much may be said, in accounting for this phenomenon, about his widely extended reputation, his imposing presence, the vulgar curiosity to see a man whom even the smallest country newspaper thought of sufficient importance to defame, his power of giving vitality to simple words which the most ignorant of his auditors could easily understand, and the instinctive respect which the rudest kind of men feel for a grand specimen of robust manhood. But the real, the substantial source of his power over such audiences proceeded from his respect for *them*; and their respect for him

was more or less consciously founded on the perception of this fact.

Indeed, a close scrutiny of his speeches will show how conscientiously he regards the rights of other minds, however inferior they may be to his own; and this virtue, for it is a virtue, is never more apparent than in his arguments and appeals addressed to popular assemblies. No working-man, whether farmer, mechanic, factory "hand," or day-laborer, ever deemed himself insulted by a word from the lips of Daniel Webster; he felt himself rather exalted in his own esteem, for the time, by coming in contact with that beneficent and comprehensive intelligence which cherished among its favorite ideas a scheme for lifting up the American laborer to a height of comfort and respectability which the European laborer could hardly hope to attain. Prominent politicians, men of wealth and influence, statesmen of high social and political rank, may at times have considered Webster as arrogant and bad-tempered, and may at times have felt disposed to fasten a quarrel upon him; even in Massachusetts this disposition broke out in conventions of the party to which he belonged; but it would be in vain to find a single laboring-man, whether he met Webster in private, or half pushed and half fought his way into a mass meeting, in order to get his ears into communication with the orator's voice, who ever heard a word from him which did not exalt the dignity of labor, or

**Sympathy
for the
laborer.** which was not full of sympathy for the laborer's occasional sorrows and privations. Webster seemed to have ever present to his mind the poverty of the humble home of his youth. His father, his brothers, he himself, had all been brought up to consider manual toil a dignified occupa-

tion, and as consistent with the exercise of all the virtues which flourish under the domestic roof. More than this, it may be said that, with the exception of a few intimate friends, his sympathies to the last were most warmly with common laborers. Indeed, if we closely study the private correspondence of this statesman, who was necessarily brought into relations, more or less friendly, with the conventionally great men of the world, European as well as American, we shall find that, after all, he took more real interest in Seth Peterson and John Taylor and Porter Wright, men connected with him in fishing and farming, than he did in the ambassadors of

foreign states whom he met as Senator or as Secretary of State, or in all the members of the polite society of Washington, New York, and Boston. He was very near to Nature himself; and the nearer a man was to Nature, the more he esteemed him. Thus persons who superintended his farms and cattle, or who pulled an oar in his boat when he ventured out in search of cod and halibut, thought "Squire Webster" a man who



Daniel Webster in Fisherman's Costume.

realized their ideal and perfection of good-fellowship; while it may confidently be said that many of his closest friends among men of culture, including lawyers, men of letters, and statesmen of the first rank, must have occasionally resented the "anfractuosities" of his mood and temper. But Seth Peterson and Porter Wright and John Taylor never complained of these "anfractuosities." Webster, in fact, is one of the few public men of the country in whose championship of the rights and sympathy with the wrongs of labor there is not the slightest trace of the arts of the demagogue; and in this fact we may find the reason why even the "roughs," who are present in every mass meeting, always treated him with respect.

If we look at Webster's greatest speeches, as, for instance, "The Reply to Hayne," "The Constitution not a Compact between Sovereign States," "The President's Protest," and others that might be mentioned, we shall find that they partake of the character of organic formations, or at least of skilful engineering or architectural constructions. Even Mr. Calhoun never approached him in this art of giving objective reality to a speech, which, after all, is found, on analysis, to consist only of a happy collocation and combination of words; but in Webster the words are either all alive with the creative spirit of the poet, or, at the worst, resemble the blocks of granite or marble which the artisan piles one on the other, and the result of which, though it may represent a poor style of architecture, is still a rude specimen of a Gothic edifice. The artist and artificer are both observable in Webster's work; but the reality and solidity of the construction cannot be questioned. At the present time an educated reader

His greatest
speeches
organic
formations.

would be specially interested in the mental processes by which Webster thus succeeded in giving objective existence and validity to the operations of his mind; and, whether sympathizing with his opinions or not, would as little think of refusing to read them because of their Whiggism as he would think of refusing to read Homer because of his heathenism, or Dante because of his Catholicism, or Milton because of his compound of Arianism and Calvinism, or Goethe because of his Pantheism. The fact which would most interest such a reader would be that Webster had, in some mysterious way, translated and transformed his abstract propositions into concrete substance and form. The form might

offend his reason, his taste, or his conscience; but he could not avoid admitting that it *had* a form, while most speeches, even those made by able men, are comparatively formless, however lucid they may be in the array of facts, and plausible in the order and connection of arguments.

In trying to explain this power, the most obvious comparison which would arise in the mind of an intelligent reader would be that Webster, as a rhetorician,



Daniel Webster under the Elm at Marshfield.

By G. P. A. Healy.

resembled Vauban¹ and Cohorn² as military engineers. In the war of debate he so *fortified* the propositions he maintained, that they could not be carried by direct assault, but must be patiently besieged. The words he employed were simple enough, and fell short of including the vocabulary of even fifth-rate declaimers; but he had the art of so disposing them that, to an honest reasoner, the position he took appeared to be impregnable. To assail it by the ordinary method of passionate protest and illogical reasoning was as futile as a dash of light cavalry would have been against the defences of such cities as Namur and Lille. Indeed, in his speech "The Constitution not a Compact between Sovereign States," he erected a whole Torres Vedras³ line of fortifications, on which legislative Massenas dashed themselves in vain, and, however strong in numbers in respect to the power of voting him down, recoiled defeated in every attempt to reason him down.

In further illustration of this peculiar power of Webster, the speech of the Seventh of March, 1850, may be cited, for its delivery is to be ranked with the most important historical events. For some years it was the object of the extremes of panegyric and the extremes

¹ Sebastien le Prestre de Vauban (1633-1707), a French military engineer and marshal, who is said to have built 33 fortresses, repaired 300, conducted 53 sieges, and taken part in 140 battles.

² Menno van Coehoorn, or Cohorn (1641-1704), a Dutch military engineer, general, and writer on the art of fortification. He constructed, among others, fortresses at Breda, Nymwegen, Bergen-op-Zoom, and Namur. At the siege of the last-named Coehoorn opposed Vauban, prior to the surrender of the town to the French; and subsequently was engineer at the time of its recapture.

³ A town in Portugal, thirty miles north of Lisbon, near which Wellington, in 1810, occupied three lines of defence, covering five hundred square miles.

of execration. But this effort is really the most loosely constructed of all the great productions of Webster's mind. In force, compactness, and completeness, in closeness of thought to things, in closeness of imagery to the reasoning it illustrates, and in general intellectual fibre, muscle, and bone, it cannot be compared to such an oration as that on the "First Settlement of New England," or such a speech as that which had for its theme "The Constitution not a Compact between Sovereign States;" but, after all deductions have been made, it was still a speech which frowned upon its opponents as a kind of verbal fortress constructed both for the purpose of defence and aggression. Its fame is due, in a great degree, to its resistance to a storm of assaults, such as had rarely before been concentrated on any speech delivered in either branch of the Congress of the United States. Indeed, a very large portion of the intellect, the moral sentiment, and the moral passion of the free States was directed against it. There was not a weapon in the armory of the dialectician or the rhetorician which was not employed with the intent of demolishing it. Contempt of Webster was vehemently taught as the beginning of political wisdom. That a speech, thus assailed, should survive the attacks made upon it, appeared to be impossible. And yet it did survive, and is alive now, while better speeches, or what the present writer thought at the time to be more convincing speeches, have not retained individual existence, however deeply they may have influenced that public opinion which, in the end, determines political events. "I still live," was Webster's declaration on his death-bed, when the friends gathered around it imagined he had breathed his last; and the

The survival of the
"Seventh
of March"
speech.

same words might be uttered by the speech of the Seventh of March, could it possess the vocal organ which announces personal existence. Between the time it was originally delivered and the present year there runs a great and broad stream of blood, shed from the veins of Northern and Southern men alike; the whole political and moral constitution of the country has practically suffered an abrupt change; new problems engage the attention of thoughtful statesmen; much is forgotten which was once considered of the first importance; but the Seventh of March speech, battered as it is by innumerable attacks, is still remembered at least as one which called forth more power than it embodied in itself. This persistence of life is due to the fact that it was "organized."

In the most excited debates in which he bore a prominent part, nothing strikes us more than the admirable self-possession, than the majestic inward calm, which presides over all the operations of his mind and the impulses of his sensibility, so that, in building up the fabric of his speech, he has his reason, imagination, and passion under full control, — using each faculty and feeling as the occasion may demand, but never allowing himself to be used *by* it, — and always therefore conveying the impression of power in reserve, while he may, in fact, be exercising all the power he has to the utmost. In laboriously erecting his edifice of reasoning he also studiously regards the intellects and the passions of ordinary men; strives to bring his mind into cordial relations with theirs; employs every faculty he possesses to give reality, to give even visibility, to his thoughts; and though he never made a speech which rivals that of Burke on the Nabob of Arcot's

Webster's
majestic
inward calm.

Debts,¹ in respect to grasp of understanding, astounding wealth of imagination and depth of moral passion, he always so contrived to organize his materials into a complete whole, that the result stood out clearly to the sight of the mind, as a structure resting on strong foundations, and reared to due height by the mingled skill of the artisan and the artist. When he does little more than weld his materials together, he is still an artificer of the old school of giant workmen, the school that dates its pedigree from Tubal Cain.²

When we reflect on the enormous number of American speeches which, when they were first delivered, were confidently predicted, by appreciating friends, to insure to the orators a fame which would be immortal, one wonders a little at the quiet persistence of the speeches of Webster in refusing to die with the abrupt suddenness of other orations, which, at the time of their delivery, seemed to have an equal chance of renown. The lifeless remains of such unfortunate failures are now entombed in that dreariest of all mausoleums, the dingy quarto volumes, hateful to all human eyes, which are lettered on the back with the title of "Congressional Debates," — a collection of printed matter which members of Congress are wont to send to a favored few among their constituents, and which are immediately consigned to the dust-barrel or sold to pedlers in waste paper, according as the rage of

¹ The Nabob of Arcot was the head of the government of what is now a district in Madras, British India. Burke's speech was delivered Feb. 28, 1785, on a motion in parliament for the production of papers relating to financial transactions of authorities in India. John Morley (*Life of Burke*, 126) calls it a masterpiece, and compares the effect of one of its pages with that of the Sistine Madonna at Dresden.

² Son of Lamech and Zillah, stated in Genesis iv. 22, to have been the inventor of the art of forging metals.

the recipients takes a scornful or an economical direction. It would seem that the speeches of Webster are saved from this fate, by the fact that in them the mental and moral life of a great man, and of a great master of the English language, is organized in a palpable intellectual form. The reader feels that they have some of the substantial qualities which he recognizes in looking at the gigantic constructions of the master workmen among the crowd of the world's engineers and architects, in looking at the organic products of Nature herself, and in surveying, through the eye of his imagination, those novel productions of Nature which great poets have embodied in works which are indelibly stamped with the character of deathlessness.

But Webster is even more obviously a poet — subordinating “the shows of things to the desires of the mind” — in his magnificent idealization, or idolization, of the Constitution and the Union. By the magic of his imagination and sensibility he contrived to impress on the minds of a majority of the people of the free States a vague, grand idea that the Constitution was a sacred instrument of government, — a holy shrine of fundamental law, which no unhallowed hands could touch without profanation, — a digested system of rights and duties, resembling those institutes which were, in early times, devised by the immortal gods for the guidance of infirm mortal man; and the mysterious creatures, half divine and half human, who framed this remarkable document, were always reverently referred to as “the Fathers,” — as persons who excelled all succeeding generations in sagacity and wisdom; as inspired prophets, who were specially selected by Divine Providence to frame the

Webster a
poet; the
Union his
ideal.

political scriptures on which our political faith was to be based, and by which our political reason was to be limited. The splendor of the glamour thus cast over the imaginations and sentiments of the people was all the more effective because it was an effluence from the mind of a statesman who, of all the statesmen of the country, was deemed the most practical, and the least deluded by any misguiding lights of fancy and abstract speculation.

There can be little doubt that Webster's impressive idealization of the Constitution gave a certain narrowness to American thinking on constitutional government and the science of politics and legislation. Foreigners, of the most liberal views, could not sometimes restrain an expression of wonder, when they found that our most intelligent men, even our jurists and publicists, hardly condescended to notice the eminent European thinkers on the philosophy of government, so absorbed were they in the contemplation of the perfection of their own. When the great civil war broke out, hundreds of thousands of American citizens marched to the battle-field with the grand passages of Webster glowing in their hearts. They met death cheerfully in the cause of the "Constitution and Union," as by him expounded and idealized; and if they were so unfortunate as not to be killed, but to be taken captive, they still rotted to death in Southern prisons, sustained by sentences of Webster's speeches which they had declaimed as boys in their country schools. Of all the triumphs of Webster as a leader of public opinion, the most remarkable was his infusing into the minds of the people of the free States the belief that the Constitution as it existed in his time was an organic fact, springing from the

His influence in the civil war of 1861-65.

intelligence, hearts, and wills of the people of the United States, and not, as it really was, an ingenious mechanical contrivance of wise men, to which the people, at the time, gave their assent.

In conclusion it may be said that the style of Webster is pre-eminently distinguished by manliness.

**Manliness
of his style.**

Nothing little, weak, whining, or sentimental can be detected in any page of the volumes of his works. A certain strength and grandeur of personality is prominent in all his speeches. When he says "I," or "my," he never appears to indulge in the bravado of self-assertion, because the words are felt to express a positive, stalwart, almost colossal manhood, which had already been implied in the close-knit sentences in which he embodied his statements and arguments. He is an eminent instance of the power which character communicates to style. Though evidently proud, self-respecting, and high-spirited, he is ever above mere vanity and egotism. Whenever he gives emphasis to the personal pronoun the reader feels that he had as much earned the right to make his opinion an authority, as he had earned the right to use the words he employs to express his ideas and sentiments. Thus, in the celebrated Smith Will trial, his antagonist, Mr. Choate, quoted a decision of Lord Chancellor Camden. In his reply, Webster argued against its validity as though it were merely a proposition laid down by Mr. Choate. "But it is not mine, it is Lord Camden's," was the instant retort. Webster paused for half a minute, and then, with his eye fixed on the presiding judge, he replied: "Lord Camden was a great judge; he is respected by every American, for he was on our side in the Revolution; but, may it please your honor, *I* differ from my Lord Camden." There

was hardly a lawyer in the United States who could have made such a statement without exposing himself to ridicule; but it did not seem at all ridiculous when the "I" stood for Daniel Webster. In his early career as a lawyer, his mode of reasoning was such as to make him practically a thirteenth juror in the panel; when his fame was fully established, he contrived, in some mysterious way, to seat himself by the side of the judges on the bench, and appear to be consulting with them as a jurist, rather than addressing them as an advocate. The personality of the man was always suppressed until there seemed to be need of asserting it; and then it was proudly pushed into prominence, though rarely passing beyond the limits justified by his acknowledged eminence as a statesman and lawyer.

But the real intellectual and moral manliness of Webster underlies all his great orations and speeches, even those where the animating life which gives them the power to persuade, convince, and uplift the reader's mind, seems to be altogether impersonal; and this plain force of manhood, this sturdy grapple with every question that comes before his understanding for settlement, leads him contemptuously to reject all the meretricious aids and ornaments of mere rhetoric, and is prominent among the many exceptional qualities of his large nature which have given him a high position among the prose-writers of his country as a consummate master of English style.

A consum-
mate master
of English.

Speeches by Daniel Webster

DANIEL WEBSTER

for YOUNG AMERICANS

THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF NEW ENGLAND

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED AT PLYMOUTH,
MASSACHUSETTS, DEC. 22, 1820.

[In 1820 the "Pilgrim Society" was formed by the citizens of Plymouth, Massachusetts, and the descendants of the Pilgrims in other places, desirous of uniting "to commemorate the landing, and to honor the memory of the intrepid men who first set foot on Plymouth Rock." The foundation of this society gave a new impulse to the anniversary celebrations of the two hundredth anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth. Mr. Webster was requested to deliver the public address on the 22d of December of that year, and the following discourse was pronounced by him, in the presence of a great gathering of people.]

LET us rejoice that we behold this day. Let us be thankful that we have lived to see the bright and happy breaking of the auspicious morn which commences the third century of the history of New England. Auspicious, indeed, — bringing a happiness beyond the common allotment of Providence to men, — full of present joy, and gilding with bright beams the prospect of futurity, is the dawn that awakens us to the commemoration of the landing of the Pilgrims.

Beginning
of the third
century of
New England
history.

Living at an epoch which naturally marks the progress of the history of our native land, we have come hither

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to celebrate the great event with which that history commenced. Forever honored be this, the place of our fathers' refuge! Forever remembered the day which saw them, weary and distressed, broken in everything but spirit, poor in all but faith and courage, at last secure from the dangers of wintry seas, and impressing this shore with the first footsteps of civilized man!

It is a noble faculty of our nature which enables us to connect our thoughts, our sympathies, and our happiness with what is distant in place or time: and, looking before and after, to hold communion at once with our ancestors and our posterity. Human and mortal although we are, we are nevertheless not mere insulated beings, without relation to the past or the future. Neither the point of time, nor the spot of earth, in which we physically live, bounds our rational and intellectual enjoyments. We live in the past by a knowledge of its history; and in the future, by hope and anticipation. By ascending to an association with our ancestors, by contemplating their example and studying their character, by partaking their sentiments and imbibing their spirit, by accompanying them in their toils, by sympathizing in their sufferings, and rejoicing in their successes and their triumphs, we seem to belong to their age and to mingle our own existence with theirs. We become their contemporaries, live the lives which they lived, endure what they endured, and partake in the rewards which they enjoyed. And in like manner, by running along the line of future time, by contemplating the probable fortunes of those who are coming after us, by attempting something which may promote their happiness and leave some not dishonorable memorial of ourselves for their regard when we shall sleep with the fathers, we protract our own

New
England's
ancestors.

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earthly being, and seem to crowd whatever is future, as well as all that is past, into the narrow compass of our earthly existence. As it is not a vain and false, but an exalted and religious imagination which leads us to raise our thoughts from the orb which, amidst this universe of worlds, the Creator has given us to inhabit, and to send them with something of the feeling which nature prompts, and teaches to be proper among children of the same Eternal Parent, to the contemplation of the myriads of fellow-beings with which his goodness has peopled the infinite of space; so neither is it false or vain to consider ourselves as interested and connected with our whole race, through all time; allied to our ancestors; allied to our posterity; closely compacted on all sides with others; ourselves being but links in the great chain of being, which begins with the origin of our race, runs onward through its successive generations, binding together the past, the present, and the future, and terminating at last, with the consummation of all things earthly, at the throne of God. ✧

We have come to this Rock, to record here our homage for our Pilgrim Fathers;¹ our sympathy in their sufferings; our gratitude for their labors; our admiration of their virtues; our veneration **The Pilgrim Fathers.** for their piety; and our attachment to those principles of civil and religious liberty which they encountered

¹ The "Pilgrims" are often confused with the "Puritans," and the words are used interchangeably. Strictly speaking, the former were the English Independents or Congregationalists who came from Holland to Plymouth in 1620; the latter, the immigrants from England to Massachusetts Bay in 1629 and following years, some of whom, at the time of their arrival in New England, retained nominal connection with the Church of England. The church polity of the two parties, however, soon became the same.

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the dangers of the ocean, the storms of heaven, the violence of savages, disease, exile, and famine, to enjoy and to establish. And we would leave here, also, for the generations which are rising up rapidly to fill our places, some proof that we have endeavored to transmit the great inheritance unimpaired; that in our estimate of public principles and private virtue, in our veneration of religion and piety, in our devotion to civil and religious liberty, in our regard for whatever advances human knowledge or improves human happiness, we are not altogether unworthy of our origin.

There is a local feeling connected with this occasion, too strong to be resisted; a sort of genius of the place, which inspires and awes us. We feel that we are on the spot where the first scene of our history was laid; where the hearths and altars of New England were first placed; where Christianity and civilization and letters made their first lodgment, in a vast extent of country, covered with a wilderness, and peopled by roving barbarians. We are here at the season of the year at which the event took place. The imagination irresistibly and rapidly draws around us the principal features and the leading characters in the original scene. We cast our eyes abroad on the ocean, and we see where the little bark, with the interesting group upon its deck, made its slow progress to the shore. We look around us, and behold the hills and promontories where the anxious eyes of our fathers first saw the places of habitation and of rest. We feel the cold which benumbed, and listen to the winds which pierced them. Beneath us is the Rock on which New England received the feet of the Pilgrims. We seem even to behold them as they struggle with the elements, and with toilsome efforts gain the

**The genius
of the place.**

**Plymouth
Rock.**

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shore. We listen to the chiefs in council ; we see the unexampled exhibition of female fortitude and resignation ; we hear the whisperings of youthful impatience ; and we see what a painter of our own has also represented by his pencil,¹ chilled and shivering childhood, houseless but for a mother's arms, couchless but for a mother's breast, till our own blood almost freezes. The mild dignity of Carver and of Bradford ; the decisive and soldier-like air and manner of Standish ; the devout Brewster ; the enterprising Allerton ; the general firmness and thoughtfulness of the whole band ; their conscious joy for dangers escaped ; their deep solicitude about dangers to come ; their trust in Heaven ; their high religious faith, full of confidence and anticipation, — all of these seem to belong to this place, and to be present upon this occasion, to fill us with reverence and admiration.

The settlement of New England by the colony which landed here on the twenty-second² of December, 1620, although not the first European establishment in what now constitutes the United States, was yet so peculiar in its causes and character, and has been followed and must still be followed by such consequences, as to give it a high claim to lasting commemoration. On these causes and consequences, more than on its immediately attendant circumstances, its importance as an historical event depends. Great actions and striking occurrences, having excited a temporary admiration, often pass away

Importance
of the land-
ing at Ply-
mouth as an
historical
event.

¹ Henry Sargent's "Landing of the Pilgrims," in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth.

² The landing at Plymouth was on Dec. 11, 1620, Old Style, corresponding to December 21 according to the present calendar, though December 22 is generally observed.

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and are forgotten, because they leave no lasting results affecting the prosperity and happiness of communities. Such is frequently the fortune of the most brilliant military achievements. Of the ten thousand battles which have been fought, of all the fields fertilized with carnage, of the banners which have been bathed in blood, of the warriors who have hoped that they had risen from the field of conquest to a glory as bright and as durable as the stars, how few that continue long to interest mankind! The victory of yesterday is reversed by the defeat of to-day: the star of military glory, rising like a meteor, like a meteor has fallen: disgrace and disaster hang on the heels of conquest and renown; victor and vanquished presently pass away to oblivion, and the world goes on in its course, with the loss only of so many lives and so much treasure.

But if this be frequently, or generally, the fortune of military achievements, it is not always so. There are enterprises, military as well as civil, which sometimes check the current of events, give a new turn to human affairs, and transmit their consequences through ages. We see their importance in their results, and call them great, because great things follow. There have been battles which have fixed the fate of nations. These come down to us in history with a solid and permanent interest, not created by a display of glittering armor, the rush of adverse battalions, the sinking and rising of pennons, the flight, the pursuit, and the victory; but by their effect in advancing or retarding human knowledge, in overthrowing or establishing despotism, in extending or destroying human happiness. When the traveller pauses on the plain of Marathon,¹ what are

¹ A plain eighteen miles northeast of Athens, between Mount Pentelicus and the sea, where, B. C. 490, 10,000 Greeks and 1,000 Plataeans,

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the emotions which most strongly agitate his breast? What is that glorious recollection which thrills through his frame, and suffuses his eyes? Not, I The Battle of Marathon. imagine, that Grecian skill and Grecian valor were here most signally displayed; but that Greece herself was saved. It is because to this spot, and to the event which has rendered it immortal, he refers all the succeeding glories of the republic. It is because, if that day had gone otherwise, Greece had perished. It is because he perceives that her philosophers and orators, her poets and painters, her sculptors and architects, her governments and free institutions, point backward to Marathon, and that their future existence seems to have been suspended on the contingency whether the Persian or the Grecian banner should wave victorious in the beams of that day's setting sun. And, as his imagination kindles at the retrospect, he is transported back to the interesting moment; he counts the fearful odds of the contending hosts; his interest for the result overwhelms him; he trembles, as if it were still uncertain, and seems to doubt whether he may consider Socrates and Plato, Demosthenes, Sophocles, and Phidias, as secure yet to himself and to the world.

"If we conquer," said the Athenian commander on the approach of that decisive day, "if we conquer, we shall make Athens the greatest city of Greece." A prophecy how well fulfilled! "If God prosper us,"

under Miltiades, defeated 100,000 Persians, thereby destroying Darius's scheme for subjugating Greece.

"The mountains look on Marathon,
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dreamed that Greece might still be free."

BYRON, *Don Juan*, canto iii, stanza 86, 3.

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might have been the more appropriate language of our fathers, when they landed upon this Rock, "if God prosper us, we shall here begin a work which shall last for ages; we shall plant here a new society, in the principles of the fullest liberty and the purest religion; we shall subdue this wilderness which is before us; we shall fill this region of the great continent, which stretches almost from pole to pole, with civilization and Christianity; the temples of the true God shall rise where now ascends the smoke of idolatrous sacrifice; fields and gardens, the flowers of summer, and the waving and golden harvest of autumn, shall spread over a thousand hills and stretch along a thousand valleys, never yet, since the creation, reclaimed to the use of civilized man. We shall whiten this coast with the canvas of a prosperous commerce; we shall stud the long and winding shore with a hundred cities. That which we sow in weakness shall be raised in strength. From our sincere but houseless worship there shall spring splendid temples to record God's goodness; from the simplicity of our social union there shall arise wise and politic constitutions of government, full of the liberty which we ourselves bring and breathe; from our zeal for learning, institutions shall spring which shall scatter the light of knowledge throughout the land, and in time, paying back where they have borrowed, shall contribute their part to the great aggregate of human knowledge; and our descendants, through all generations, shall look back to this spot and to this hour with unabated affection and regard.

Of the motives which influenced the first settlers to a voluntary exile, induced them to relinquish their native country, and to seek an asylum in this then unexplored

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wilderness, the first and principal, no doubt, were connected with religion. They sought to enjoy a higher degree of religious freedom, and what they esteemed a purer form of religious worship, than was allowed to their choice, or presented to their imitation, in the Old World. The love of religious liberty is a stronger sentiment, when fully excited, than an attachment to civil or political freedom. That freedom which the conscience demands, and which men feel bound by their hope of salvation to contend for, can hardly fail to be attained. Conscience, in the cause of religion and the worship of the Deity, prepares the mind to act and to suffer beyond almost all other causes. It sometimes gives an impulse so irresistible that no fetters of power or of opinion can withstand it. History instructs us that this love of religious liberty, a compound sentiment in the breast of man, made up of the clearest sense of right and the highest conviction of duty, is able to look the sternest despotism in the face, and, with means apparently most inadequate, to shake principalities and powers. There is a boldness, a spirit of daring, in religious reformers, not to be measured by the general rules which control men's purposes and actions. If the hand of power be laid upon it, this only seems to augment its force and its elasticity, and to cause its action to be more formidable and violent. Human invention has devised nothing, human power has compassed nothing, that can forcibly restrain it when it breaks forth. Nothing can stop it, but to give way to it; nothing can check it, but indulgence. It loses its power only when it has gained its object. The principle of toleration, to which the world has come so slowly, is at once the most just and the most wise of all principles. Even when religious feeling

Love of religious liberty the motive for the settlement of New England.

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takes a character of extravagance and enthusiasm, and seems to threaten the order of society and shake the columns of the social edifice, its principal danger is in its restraint. If it be allowed indulgence and expansion, like the elemental fires, it only agitates, and perhaps purifies, the atmosphere; while its efforts to throw off restraint would burst the world asunder.

It is certain, that, although many of them were republicans in principle, we have no evidence that our New England ancestors would have emigrated, as they did, from their own native country, would have become wanderers in Europe, and finally would have undertaken the establishment of a colony here, merely from their dislike of the political systems of Europe. They fled not so much from the civil government as from the hierarchy, and the laws which enforced conformity to the church establishment. Mr. Robinson¹ had left England as early as 1608, on account of the persecutions for non-conformity, and had retired to Holland. He left England from no disappointed ambition in affairs of state, from no regrets at the want of preferment in the church, nor from any motive of distinction or of gain. Uniformity in matters of religion was pressed with such extreme rigor that a voluntary exile seemed the most eligible mode of escaping from the penalties of non-compliance. The accession of Elizabeth had, it is true, quenched the fires of Smithfield,²

¹ John Robinson, 1575-1625, an influential English Independent (or Congregational) minister, who left the Church of England and joined the "Separatists" in 1604, and was their pastor at Scrooby, England, removing to Amsterdam, Holland, in 1608, and continuing his leadership of Independents there and in Leyden.

² Smithfield is a section of London, north of St. Paul's Cathedral, where alleged heretics were burned at the stake during the reign of Queen Mary, in 1555 and subsequent years.

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and put an end to the easy acquisition of the crown of martyrdom. Her long reign had established the Reformation, but toleration was a virtue beyond her conception and beyond the age. She left no example of it to her successor; and he was not of a character which rendered it probable that a sentiment either so wise or so liberal would originate with him. At the present period it seems incredible that the learned, accomplished, unassuming, and inoffensive Robinson should neither be tolerated in his peaceable mode of worship in his own country, nor suffered quietly to depart from it. Yet such was the fact. He left his country by stealth, that he might elsewhere enjoy those rights which ought to belong to men in all countries. The departure of the Pilgrims for Holland is deeply interesting, from its circumstances, and also as it marks the character of the times, independently of its connection with names now incorporated with the history of empire. The embarkation was intended to be made in such a manner that it might escape the notice of the officers of government. Great pains had been taken to secure boats which should come undiscovered to the shore and receive the fugitives; and frequent disappointments had been experienced in this respect.

At length the appointed time came, bringing with it unusual severity of cold and rain. An unfrequented and barren heath, on the shores of Lincolnshire, was the selected spot where the feet of the Pilgrims were to tread for the last time the land of their fathers. The vessel which was to receive them did not come until the next day, and in the mean time the little band was collected, and men and women and children and baggage were crowded together, in melancholy and distressed confusion. The

The embarkation from
Lincolnshire.

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sea was rough, and the women and children were already sick, from their passage down the river to the place of embarkation on the sea. At length the wished-for boat silently and fearfully approaches the shore, and men and women and children, shaking with fear and with cold, as many as the small vessel could bear, venture off on a dangerous sea. Immediately the advance of horses is heard from behind, armed men appear, and those not yet embarked are seized and taken into custody. In the hurry of the moment, the first parties had been sent on board without any attempt to keep members of the same family together; and on account of the appearance of the horsemen, the boat never returned for the residue. Those who had got away, and those who had not, were in equal distress. A storm, of great

**The stormy
voyage to
Holland.**

violence and long duration, arose at sea, which not only protracted the voyage, rendered distressing by the want of all those accommodations which the interruption of the embarkation had occasioned, but also forced the vessel out of her course, and menaced immediate shipwreck; while those on shore, when they were dismissed from the custody of the officers of justice, having no longer homes or houses to retire to, and their friends and protectors being already gone, became objects of necessary charity as well as of deep commiseration.

As this scene passes before us, we can hardly forbear asking whether this be a band of malefactors and felons flying from justice. What are their crimes, that they hide themselves in darkness? To what punishment are they exposed, that, to avoid it, men and women and children thus encounter the surf of the North Sea and the terrors of a night storm? What induces this armed pursuit and this arrest of fugitives, of all ages



and both sexes? Truth does not allow us to answer these inquiries in a manner that does credit to the wisdom or the justice of the times. This was not the flight of guilt, but of virtue. It was an humble and peaceable religion, flying from causeless oppression. It was conscience, attempting to escape from the arbitrary rule of the Stuarts. It was Robinson and Brewster, leading off their little band from their native soil, at first to find shelter on the shore of the neighboring continent, but ultimately to come hither; and having surmounted all difficulties and braved a thousand dangers, to find here a place of refuge and of rest. Thanks be to God, that this spot was honored as the asylum of religious liberty! May its standard, reared here, remain forever! May it rise up as high as heaven, till its banner shall fan the air of both continents, and wave as a glorious ensign of peace and security to the nations!

They came hither to a land from which they were never to return. Hither they had brought, and here they were to fix, their hopes, their attachments, and their objects in life. Some natural tears they shed, as they left the pleasant abodes of their fathers, and some emotions they suppressed, when the white cliffs of their native country, now seen for the last time, grew dim to their sight. They were acting, however, upon a resolution not to be daunted. With whatever stifled regrets, with whatever occasional hesitation, with whatever appalling apprehensions, which might sometimes arise with force to shake the firmest purpose, they had yet committed themselves to Heaven and the elements; and a thousand leagues of water soon interposed to separate them forever from the region which gave them birth. A new existence awaited them here; and

**The Pilgrims
sought a
home, not a
place of exile.**

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when they saw these shores, rough, cold, barbarous, and barren, as then they were, they beheld their country. That mixed and strong feeling which we call love of country, and which is, in general, never extinguished in the heart of man, grasped and embraced its proper object here. Whatever constitutes country, except the earth and the sun, all the moral causes of affection and attachment which operate upon the heart, they had brought with them to their new abode. Here were now their families and friends, their homes and their property. Before they reached the shore, they had established the elements of a social system, and at a much earlier period had settled their forms of religious worship. At the moment of their landing, therefore, they possessed institutions of government and institutions of religion; and friends and families, and social and religious institutions, framed by consent, founded on choice and preference, how nearly do these fill up our whole idea of country! The morning that beamed on the first night of their repose saw the Pilgrims already at home in their country. There were political institutions, and civil liberty, and religious worship. Poetry has fancied nothing, in the wanderings of heroes, so distinct and characteristic. Here was man, indeed, unprotected, and unprovided for, on the shore of a rude and fearful wilderness; but it was politic, intelligent, and educated man. Everything was civilized but the physical world. Institutions, containing in substance all that ages had done for human government, were organized in a forest. Cultivated mind was to act on uncultivated nature; and, more than all, a government and a country were to commence, with the very first foundations laid under the divine light of the Christian religion. Happy auspices of a happy futurity! Who

would wish that his country's existence had otherwise begun? Who would desire the power of going back to the ages of fable? Who would wish for an origin obscured in the darkness of antiquity? Who would wish for other emblazoning of his country's heraldry, or other ornaments of her genealogy, than to be able to say, that her first existence was with intelligence, her first breath the inspiration of liberty, her first principle the truth of divine religion?

Local attachments and sympathies would ere long spring up in the breasts of our ancestors, endearing to them the place of their refuge. Whatever natural objects are associated with interesting scenes and high efforts obtain a hold on human feeling, and demand from the heart a sort of recognition and regard. This Rock soon became hallowed in the esteem of the Pilgrims, and these hills grateful to their sight. Neither they nor their children were again to till the soil of England, nor again to traverse the seas which surround her. But here was a new sea, now open to their enterprise, and a new soil, which had not failed to respond gratefully to their laborious industry, and which was already assuming a robe of verdure. Hardly had they provided shelter for the living, ere they were summoned to erect sepulchres for the dead. The ground had become sacred, by enclosing the remains of some of their companions and connections. A parent, a child, a husband, or a wife had gone the way of all flesh, and mingled with the dust of New England. We naturally look with strong emotions to the spot, though it be a wilderness, where the ashes of those we have loved repose. Where the heart has laid down what it loved most, there it is desirous of laying itself down. No sculptured marble, no enduring monument, no honorable inscription,

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no ever-burning taper that would drive away the darkness of the tomb, can soften our sense of the reality of death, and hallow to our feelings the ground which is to cover us, like the consciousness that we shall sleep, dust to dust, with the objects of our affections.

In a short time other causes sprung up to bind the Pilgrims with new cords to their chosen land. Children **Their chosen land.** were born, and the hopes of future generations arose, in the spot of their new habitation. The second generation found this the land of their nativity, and saw that they were bound to its fortunes. They beheld their fathers' graves around them, and while they read the memorials of their toils and labors, they rejoiced in the inheritance which they found bequeathed to them.

The nature and constitution of society and government in this country are interesting topics, to which

Popular government in America. I would devote what remains of the time allowed to this occasion. Of our system of government the first thing to be said is, that it is really and practically a free system. It originates entirely with the people, and rests on no other foundation than their assent. To judge of its actual operation, it is not enough to look merely at the form of its construction. The practical character of government depends often on a variety of considerations, besides the abstract frame of its constitutional organization. Among these are the condition and tenure of property; the laws regulating its alienation and descent; the presence or absence of a military power; an armed or unarmed yeomanry; the spirit of the age, and the degree of general intelligence. In these respects it cannot be denied that the circumstances of this country are most

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favorable to the hope of maintaining the government of a great nation on principles entirely popular. In the absence of military power, the nature of government must essentially depend on the manner in which property is holden and distributed. There is a natural influence belonging to property, whether it exists in many hands or few; and it is on the rights of property that both despotism and unrestrained popular violence ordinarily commence their attacks. Our ancestors began their system of government here under a condition of comparative equality in regard to wealth, and their early laws were of a nature to favor and continue this equality.

A republican form of government rests not more on political constitutions than on those laws which regulate the descent and transmission of property. Governments like ours could not have been maintained where property was holden according to the principles of the feudal system; nor, on the other hand, could the feudal constitution possibly exist with us. Our New England ancestors brought hither no great capitals from Europe; and if they had, there was nothing productive in which they could have been invested. They left behind them the whole feudal policy of the other continent. They broke away at once from the system of military service established in the Dark Ages, and which continues, down even to the present time, more or less to affect the condition of property all over Europe. They came to a new country. There were, as yet, no lands yielding rent, and no tenants rendering service. The whole soil was unreclaimed from barbarism. They were themselves, either from their original condition or from the necessity of their common interest, nearly on a general level in respect to property. Their

The distribution of property in New England.

situation demanded a parcelling out and division of the lands, and it may be fairly said, that this necessary act fixed the future frame and form of their government. The character of their political institutions was determined by the fundamental laws respecting property.

The laws rendered estates divisible among sons and daughters. The right of primogeniture, at first limited and curtailed, was afterwards abolished. The property was all freehold. The entailment of estates, long trusts, and the other processes for fettering and tying up inheritances, were not applicable to the condition of society, and seldom made use of. On the contrary, alienation of the land was every way facilitated, even to the subjecting of it to every species of debt. The establishment of public registries, and the simplicity of our forms of conveyance, have greatly facilitated the change of real estate from one proprietor to another. The consequence of all these causes has been a great subdivision of the soil, and a great equality of condition; the true basis, most certainly, of a popular government. "If the people," says Harrington, "hold three parts in four of the territory, it is plain there can neither be any single person nor nobility able to dispute the government with them; in this case, therefore, except force be interposed, they govern themselves."

The division of governments into departments, and the division, again, of the legislative department into two chambers, are essential provisions in our system. This last, although not new in itself, yet seems to be new in its application to governments wholly popular. The Grecian republics, it is plain, knew nothing of it; and in Rome, the check and balance of legislative power, such as it was, lay between

The American system of government.

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the people and the senate. Indeed, few things are more difficult than to ascertain accurately the true nature and construction of the Roman commonwealth.

The relative power of the senate and the people, of the consuls and the tribunes, appears not to have been at all times the same, nor at any time accurately defined or strictly observed. Cicero, indeed, describes to us an admirable arrangement of political power, and a balance of the constitution, in that beautiful passage in which he compares the democracies of Greece with the Roman commonwealth.

**The Roman
common-
wealth.**

But at what time this wise system existed in this perfection at Rome, no proofs remain to show. Her constitution, originally framed for a monarchy, never seemed to be adjusted in its several parts after the expulsion of the kings. Liberty there was, but it was a disputatious, an uncertain, an ill-secured liberty. The patrician and plebeian orders, instead of being matched and joined, each in its just place and proportion, to sustain the fabric of the state, were rather like hostile powers, in perpetual conflict. With us, an attempt has been made, and so far not without success, to divide representation into chambers, and, by difference of age, character, qualification, or mode of election, to establish salutary checks, in governments altogether elective.

Having detained you so long with these observations, I must yet advert to another most interesting topic, — the Free Schools. In this particular New England may be allowed to claim, I think, a merit of a peculiar character. She early adopted, and has constantly maintained, the principle that it is the undoubted right and the bounden duty of

**Education
in New
England.**

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government to provide for the instruction of all youth. That which is elsewhere left to chance or to charity, we secure by law. For the purpose of public instruction, we hold every man subject to taxation in proportion to his property, and we look not to the question, whether he himself have, or have not, children to be benefited by the education for which he pays. We regard it as a wise and liberal system of police, by which property, and life, and the peace of society are secured. We seek to prevent in some measure the extension of the penal code, by inspiring a salutary and conservative principle of virtue and of knowledge in an early age. We strive to excite a feeling of respectability, and a sense of character, by enlarging the capacity and increasing the sphere of intellectual enjoyment. By general instruction, we seek, as far as possible, to purify the whole moral atmosphere; to keep good sentiments uppermost, and to turn the strong current of feeling and opinion, as well as the censures of the law and the denunciations of religion, against immorality and crime. We hope for a security beyond the law, and above the law, in the prevalence of an enlightened and well-principled moral sentiment. We hope to continue and prolong the time when, in the villages and farm-houses of New England, there may be undisturbed sleep within unbarred doors. And knowing that our government rests directly on the public will, in order that we may preserve it we endeavor to give a safe and proper direction to that public will. We do not, indeed, expect all men to be philosophers or statesmen; but we confidently trust, and our expectation of the duration of our system of government rests on that trust, that, by the diffusion of general knowledge and good and virtuous sentiments, the political fabric may be secure, as well against open violence and over-

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throw as against the slow, but sure, undermining of licentiousness.

A conviction of the importance of public instruction was one of the earliest sentiments of our ancestors. No lawgiver of ancient or modern times has expressed more just opinions, or adopted wiser measures, than the early records of the Colony of Plymouth show to have prevailed here. Assembled on this very spot, a hundred and fifty-three years ago, the legislature of this Colony declared, "Forasmuch as the maintenance of good literature doth much tend to the advancement of the weal and flourishing state of societies and republics, this Court doth therefore order, that in whatever township in this government, consisting of fifty families or upwards, any meet man shall be obtained to teach a grammar school, such township shall allow at least twelve pounds, to be raised by rate on all the inhabitants."

Having provided that all youth should be instructed in the elements of learning by the institution of free schools, our ancestors had yet another duty **Harvard** to perform. Men were to be educated for **College.** the professions and the public. For this purpose they founded the university, and with incredible zeal and perseverance they cherished and supported it, through all trials and discouragements. On the subject of the university, it is not possible for a son of New England to think without pleasure, or to speak without emotion. Nothing confers more honor on the state where it is established, or more utility on the country at large. A respectable university is an establishment which must be the work of time. If pecuniary means were not wanting, no new institution could possess character and respectability at once. We owe deep obligation to our ancestors, who began, almost on the

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moment of their arrival, the work of building up this institution.

Although established in a different government, the Colony of Plymouth manifested warm friendship for Harvard College. At an early period, its government took measures to promote a general subscription through-



A View of Harvard College.

out all the towns in this Colony, in aid of its small funds. Other colleges were subsequently founded and endowed, in other places, as the ability of the people allowed; and we may flatter ourselves that the means of education at present enjoyed in New England are not only adequate to the diffusion of the elements of knowledge among all classes, but sufficient also for respectable attainments in literature and the sciences.

Lastly, our ancestors established their system of government on morality and religious sentiment. Moral habits, they believed, cannot safely be trusted on any other foundation than religious principle, nor any government be secure which is not supported by moral habits. Living under the heavenly light of revelation, they hoped to find all the social

**Religious
influences.**

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dispositions, all the duties which men owe to each other and to society, enforced and performed. Whatever makes men good Christians, makes them good citizens. Our fathers came here to enjoy their religion free and unmolested; and, at the end of two centuries, there is nothing upon which we can pronounce more confidently, nothing of which we can express a more deep and earnest conviction, than of the inestimable importance of that religion to man, both in regard to this life and that which is to come.

If the blessings of our political and social condition have not been too highly estimated, we cannot well overrate the responsibility and duty which they impose upon us. We hold these institutions of government, religion, and learning to be transmitted as well as enjoyed. We are in the lines of conveyance, through which whatever has been obtained by the spirit and efforts of our ancestors is to be communicated to our children.

**The duty of
the descend-
ants of the
Pilgrims.**

We are bound not only to maintain the general principles of public liberty, but to support also those existing forms of government which have so well secured its enjoyment, and so highly promoted the public prosperity. It is now more than thirty years that these States have been united under the Federal Constitution, and whatever fortune may await them hereafter, it is impossible that this period of their history should not be regarded as distinguished by signal prosperity and success. They must be sanguine, indeed, who can hope for benefit from change. Whatever division of the public judgment may have existed in relation to particular measures of the government, all must agree, one should think, in the

**American
constitutional
history.**

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opinion that in its general course it has been eminently productive of public happiness. Its most ardent friends could not well have hoped from it more than it has accomplished; and those who disbelieved or doubted ought to feel less concern about predictions which the event has not verified than pleasure in the good which has been obtained. Whoever shall hereafter write this part of our history, although he may see occasional errors or defects, will be able to record no great failure in the ends and objects of government. Still less will he be able to record any series of lawless and despotic acts, or any successful usurpation. His page will contain no exhibition of provinces depopulated, of civil authority habitually trampled down by military power, or of a community crushed by the burden of taxation. He will speak, rather, of public liberty protected, and public happiness advanced; of increased revenue, and population augmented beyond all example; of the growth of commerce, manufactures, and the arts; and of that happy condition in which the restraint and coercion of government are almost invisible and imperceptible, and its influence felt only in the benefits which it confers. We can entertain no better wish for our country than that this government may be preserved; nor have a clearer duty than to maintain and support it in the full exercise of all its just constitutional powers.

The cause of science and literature also imposes upon us an important and delicate trust. The wealth and
American literature. population of the country are now so far advanced as to authorize the expectation of a correct literature and a well-formed taste, as well as respectable progress in the abstruse sciences. The country has risen from a state of colonial subjection; it has established an independent government, and is

now in the undisturbed enjoyment of peace and political security. The elements of knowledge are universally diffused, and the reading portion of the community is large. Let us hope that the present may be an auspicious era of literature. If, almost on the day of their landing, our ancestors founded schools and endowed colleges, what obligations do not rest upon us, living under circumstances so much more favorable both for providing and for using the means of education? Literature becomes free institutions. It is the graceful ornament of civil liberty, and a happy restraint on the asperities which political controversies sometimes occasion. Just taste is not only an embellishment of society, but it rises almost to the rank of the virtues, and diffuses positive good throughout the whole extent of its influence. There is a connection between right feeling and right principles, and truth in taste is allied with truth in morality. With nothing in our past history to discourage us, and with something in our present condition and prospects to animate us, let us hope that, as it is our fortune to live in an age when we may behold a wonderful advancement of the country in all its other great interests, we may see also equal progress and success attend the cause of letters.

Finally, let us not forget the religious character of our origin. Our fathers were brought hither by their high veneration for the Christian religion. **The influence of religion.** They journeyed by its light, and labored in its hope. They sought to incorporate its principles with the elements of their society, and to diffuse its influence through all their institutions, civil, political, or literary. Let us cherish these sentiments, and extend this influence still more widely, in the full conviction that that is the happiest society which partakes in

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the highest degree of the mild and peaceful spirit of Christianity.

The hours of this day are rapidly flying, and this occasion will soon be passed. Neither we nor our children can expect to behold its return.

**The future
progress of
New England.**

They are in the distant regions of futurity, they exist only in the all-creating power of God, who shall stand here a hundred years hence, to trace, through us, their descent from the Pilgrims, and to survey, as we have now surveyed, the progress of their country during the lapse of a century. We would anticipate their concurrence with us in our sentiments of deep regard for our common ancestors. We would anticipate and partake the pleasure with which they will then recount the steps of New England's advancement. On the morning of that day, although it will not disturb us in our repose, the voice of acclamation and gratitude, commencing on the Rock of Plymouth, shall be transmitted through millions of the sons of the Pilgrims, till it lose itself in the murmurs of the Pacific seas.

We would leave, for the consideration of those who shall then occupy our places, some proof that we hold the blessings transmitted from our fathers in just estimation; some proof of our attachment to the cause of good government, and of civil and religious liberty; some proof of a sincere and ardent desire to promote everything which may enlarge the understandings and improve the hearts of men. And when, from the long distance of a hundred years, they shall look back upon us, they shall know, at least, that we possessed affections which, running backward and warming with gratitude for what our ancestors have done for our happiness, run forward also to our posterity, and meet them with cordial salutation, ere yet they have arrived on the shore of being.

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Advance, then, ye future generations! We would hail you, as you rise in your long succession, to fill the places which we now fill, and to taste the blessings of existence where we are passing, and soon shall have passed, our own human duration. We bid you welcome to this pleasant land of the fathers. We bid you welcome to the healthful skies and the verdant fields of New England. We greet your accession to the great inheritance which we have enjoyed. We welcome you to the blessings of good government and religious liberty. We welcome you to the treasures of science and the delights of learning. We welcome you to the transcendent sweets of domestic life, to the happiness of kindred and parents and children. We welcome you to the immeasurable blessings of rational existence, the immortal hope of Christianity, and the light of everlasting truth!

THE BUNKER HILL MONUMENT

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE LAYING OF THE
CORNER-STONE AT CHARLESTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS,
JUNE 17, 1825¹

THIS uncounted multitude before me and around me proves the feeling which the occasion has excited. These thousands of human faces, glowing with sympathy and joy, and from the impulses of a common gratitude turned reverently to heaven in this spacious temple of the firmament, proclaim that the day, the place, and the purpose of our assembling have made a deep impression on our hearts.

If, indeed, there be anything in local association fit to affect the mind of man, we need not strive to repress the emotions which agitate us here. We are among the sepulchres of our fathers. We are on ground distinguished by their valor, their constancy, and the shedding of their blood. We are here, not to fix an uncertain date in our annals, nor to draw into notice an obscure and unknown spot. If our humble purpose had never been conceived, if we ourselves had never

¹ The monument, erected by an association which aroused national as well as local interest and support, is a granite obelisk, two hundred and twenty-one feet high, actually standing on Breed's, not Bunker Hill. The two eminences are seven hundred yards apart, and both were scenes of conflict, the American redoubt being on Breed's; but general use has long sanctioned the expression "the battle of Bunker Hill." The monument was finished in 1842.



been born, the 17th of June, 1775, would have been a day on which all subsequent history would have poured its light, and the eminence where we stand a point of attraction to the eyes of successive generations. But we are Americans.

The Battle
of Bunker
Hill, June
17, 1775.

We live in what may be called the early age of this great continent; and we know that our posterity, through all time, are here to enjoy and suffer the allotments of humanity. We see before us a probable train of great events; we know that our own fortunes have been happily cast; and it is natural, therefore, that we should be moved by the contemplation of occurrences which have guided our destiny before many of us were born, and settled the condition in which we should pass that portion of our existence which God allows to men on earth. ✓

We do not read even of the discovery of this continent, without feeling something of a personal interest in the event; without being reminded how much it has affected our own fortunes and our own existence. It would be still more unnatural for us, therefore, than for others, to contemplate with unaffected minds that interesting, I may say that most touching and pathetic scene, when the great discoverer of America stood on the deck of his shattered bark, the shades of night falling on the sea, yet no man sleeping; tossed on the billows of an unknown ocean, yet the stronger billows of alternate hope and despair tossing his own troubled thoughts; extending forward his harassed frame, straining westward his anxious and eager eyes, till Heaven at last granted him a moment of rapture and ecstasy, in blessing his vision with the sight of the unknown world.

The
discovery
of America.

Nearer to our times, more closely connected with our

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fates, and therefore still more interesting to our feelings and affections, is the settlement of our own country by colonists from England. We cherish every memorial of these worthy ancestors; we celebrate their patience and fortitude; we admire their daring enterprise; we teach our children to venerate their piety; and we are justly proud of being descended from men who have set the world an example of founding civil institutions on the great and united principles of human freedom and human knowledge. To us, their children, the story of their labors and sufferings can never be without its interest. We shall not stand unmoved on the shore of Plymouth, while the sea continues to wash it: nor will our brethren in another early and ancient colony forget the place of its first establishment, till their river shall cease to flow by it.¹ No vigor of youth, no maturity of manhood, will lead the nation to forget the spots where its infancy was cradled and defended.

But the great event in the history of the continent, which we are now met here to commemorate, that prodigy of modern times, at once the wonder and the blessing of the world, is the American Revolution. In a day of extraordinary prosperity and happiness, of high national honor, distinction, and power, we are brought together, in this place, by our love of country, by our admiration of exalted character, by our gratitude for signal services and patriotic devotion.

The Society whose organ I am was formed for the purpose of rearing some honorable and durable monu-

¹ Jamestown, Virginia, on the James River, where the first permanent English settlement in the United States was made May 13, 1607.

ment to the memory of the early friends of American Independence. They have thought that for this object no time could be more propitious than the present prosperous and peaceful period, that no place could claim preference over this memorable spot, and that no day could be more auspicious to the undertaking than the anniversary of the battle which was here fought. The foundation of that monument we have now laid. With solemnities suited to the occasion, with prayers to Almighty God for his blessing, and in the midst of this cloud of witnesses, we have begun the work. We trust it will be prosecuted, and that, springing from a broad foundation, rising high in massive solidity and unadorned grandeur, it may remain as long as Heaven permits the works of man to last, a fit emblem, both of the events in memory of which it is raised, and of the gratitude of those who have reared it.

The object
of the
monument.

We know, indeed, that the record of illustrious actions is most safely deposited in the universal remembrance of mankind. We know that if we could cause this structure to ascend, not only till it reached the skies, but till it pierced them, its broad surfaces could still contain but part of that which, in an age of knowledge, hath already been spread over the earth, and which history charges itself with making known to all future times. We know that no inscription on entablatures less broad than the earth itself can carry information of the events we commemorate where it has not already gone; and that no structure which shall not outlive the duration of letters and knowledge among men can prolong the memorial. But our object is, by this edifice, to show our own deep sense of the value and importance of the achievements of our ancestors;

and, by presenting this work of gratitude to the eye, to keep alive similar sentiments, and to foster a constant regard for the principles of the Revolution. Human beings are composed, not of reason only, but of imagination also, and sentiment; and that is neither wasted nor misapplied which is appropriated to the purpose of giving right direction to sentiments, and opening proper springs of feeling in the heart.

Let it not be supposed that our object is to perpetuate national hostility, or even to cherish a mere military spirit. It is higher, purer, nobler. We consecrate our work to the spirit of national independence, and we wish that the light of peace may rest upon it forever. We rear a memorial of our conviction of that unmeasured benefit which has been conferred on our own land, and of the happy influences which have been produced, by the same events, on the general interests of mankind. We come, as Americans, to mark a spot which must forever be dear to us and our posterity. We wish that whosoever, in all coming time, shall turn his eye hither, may behold that the place is not undistinguished where the first great battle of the Revolution was fought. We wish that this structure may proclaim the magnitude and importance of that event to every class and every age. We wish that infancy may learn the purpose of its erection from maternal lips, and that weary and withered age may behold it, and be solaced by the recollections which it suggests. We wish that labor may look up here, and be proud in the midst of its toil. We wish that, in those days of disaster which, as they come upon all nations, must be expected to come upon us also, desponding patriotism may turn its eyes hitherward, and be assured that the foundations of our national power

**Importance
of the site.**

are still strong. We wish that this column, rising towards heaven among the pointed spires of so many temples dedicated to God, may contribute also to produce, in all minds, a pious feeling of dependence and gratitude. We wish, finally, that the last object to the sight of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden his who revisits it, may be something which shall remind him of the liberty and the glory of his country. Let it rise! let it rise, till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit.

We still have among us some of those who were active agents in the scenes of 1775, and who are now here, from every quarter of New England, to visit once more, and under circumstances so affecting, I had almost said so overwhelming, this renowned theatre of their courage and patriotism.

The survivors of
1775.

Venerable men! you have come down to us from a former generation. Heaven has bounteously lengthened out your lives, that you might behold this joyous day. You are now where you stood fifty years ago, this very hour, with your brothers and your neighbors, shoulder to shoulder, in the strife for your country. Behold, how altered! The same heavens are indeed over your heads; the same ocean rolls at your feet; but all else how changed! You hear now no roar of hostile cannon, you see no mixed volumes of smoke and flame rising from burning Charlestown. The ground strewed with the dead and the dying; the impetuous charge; the steady and successful repulse; the loud call to repeated assault; the summoning of all that is manly to repeated resistance; a thousand bosoms freely and fearlessly bared in an instant to whatever of terror there may be in war and death, — all these you have witnessed, but

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you witness them no more. All is peace. The heights of yonder metropolis, its towers and roofs, which you then saw filled with wives and children and countrymen in distress and terror, and looking with unutterable emotions for the issue of the combat, have presented you to-day with the sight of its whole happy population, come out to welcome and greet you with a universal jubilee. Yonder proud ships, by a felicity of position appropriately lying at the foot of this mount, and seeming fondly to cling around it, are not means of annoyance to you, but your country's own means of distinction and defence. All is peace; and God has granted you this sight of your country's happiness, ere you slumber in the grave. He has allowed you to behold and to partake the reward of your patriotic toils; and he has allowed us, your sons and countrymen, to meet you here, and in the name of the present generation, in the name of your country, in the name of liberty, to thank you!

But, alas! you are not all here! Time and the sword have thinned your ranks. Prescott, Putnam, Stark, Brooks, Read, Pomeroy, Bridge! our eyes
The dead patriots. seek for you in vain amid this broken band. You are gathered to your fathers, and live only to your country in her grateful remembrance and your own bright example. But let us not too much grieve that you have met the common fate of men. You lived at least long enough to know that your work had been nobly and successfully accomplished. You lived to see your country's independence established, and to sheathe your swords from war. On the light of Liberty you saw arise the light of Peace, like

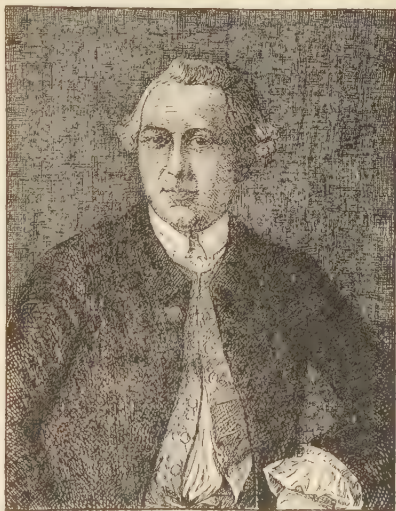
"another morn,
Risen on mid-noon;"

and the sky on which you closed your eyes was cloudless.

But ah! Him!¹ the first great martyr in this great cause! Him! the premature victim of his own self-devoting heart! Him! the head of our civil councils, and the destined leader of our military bands, whom nothing brought hither but the unquenchable fire of his own spirit! Him! cut off by

Joseph
Warren.

Providence in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom; falling ere he saw the star of his country rise; pouring out his generous blood like water, before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage! — how shall I struggle with the emotions that stifle the utterance of thy name! Our poor work may perish; but thine shall endure! This mon-



Joseph Warren.

ument may moulder away; the solid ground it rests upon may sink down to a level with the sea; but thy

¹ It is no part of the purpose of the present edition to undertake to criticise the rhetoric of Webster. But the use of "him" in the objective case, in the present paragraph, followed by "thy," is so uncommon as to call for mention. Most rhetoricians would employ "he," followed by "his;" or "thou," followed by "thy." A use of cases identical with Webster's is found in the well-known second stanza of S. F. Smith's "America":—

"My native country, *thee*,
Land of the noble free,—
Thy name I love."

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memory shall not fail ! Wheresoever among men a heart shall be found that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall be to claim kindred with thy spirit !

But the scene amidst which we stand does not permit us to confine our thoughts or our sympathies to those fearless spirits who hazarded or lost their lives on this consecrated spot. We have the happiness to rejoice here in the presence of a most worthy representation of the survivors of the whole Revolutionary army.

Veterans ! you are the remnant of many a well-fought field. You bring with you marks of honor from Trenton and Monmouth, from Yorktown, Camden, Bennington, and Saratoga. Veterans of half a century ! when in your youthful days you put everything at hazard in your country's cause, good as that cause was, and sanguine as youth is, still your fondest hopes did not stretch onward to an hour like this ! At a period to which you could not reasonably have expected to arrive, at a moment of national prosperity such as you could never have foreseen, you are now met here to enjoy the fellowship of old soldiers, and to receive the overflowings of a universal gratitude.

But your agitated countenances and your heaving breasts inform me that even this is not an unmixed joy. I perceive that a tumult of contending feelings rushes upon you. The images of the dead, as well as the persons of the living, present themselves before you. The scene overwhelms you, and I turn from it. May the Father of all mercies smile upon your declining years, and bless them ! And when you shall here have exchanged your embraces, when you shall once more have pressed the hands which have been so often extended to

**The veterans
of the Revo-
lution.**

give succor in adversity, or grasped in the exultation of victory, then look abroad upon this lovely land which your young valor defended, and mark the happiness with which it is filled; yea, look abroad upon the whole earth, and see what a name you have contributed to give to your country, and what a praise you have added to freedom, and then rejoice in the sympathy and gratitude which beam upon your last days from the improved condition of mankind!

Sir, we are assembled to commemorate the establishment of great public principles of liberty, and to do honor to the distinguished dead. The occasion is too severe for eulogy of the living. Tribute to Lafayette.

But, Sir, your interesting relation to this country, the peculiar circumstances which surround you and surround us, call on me to express the happiness which we derive from your presence and aid in this solemn commemoration.¹

Fortunate, fortunate man! with what measure of devotion will you not thank God for the circumstances of your extraordinary life! You are connected

¹ The Marquis de la Fayette (1757-1834), a member of a rich and noble French family, equipped a vessel at his own cost, and came to America in 1777, to aid the Revolutionists. At once brave and judicious, he became the friend of Washington, and was made major-general, distinguishing himself as a fighter or strategist at Brandywine, Monmouth, and Yorktown. Returning to France after the war, he took a middle course in the French Revolution, for which he later was subjected to the unwarranted sneers of Carlyle. Imprisoned for years in Austria, he was released by request of Napoleon in 1797. In 1824 he again visited the United States, being everywhere greeted with enthusiasm, and receiving from Congress \$200,000 and a township of land. Four years before his death he was made head of the French National Guard by the party which dethroned the Bourbon, Charles X., and transferred the crown to Louis Philippe.

with both hemispheres and with two generations. Heaven saw fit to ordain that the electric spark of liberty should be conducted, through you, from the New World to the Old; and we, who are now here to perform this duty of patriotism, have all of us long ago received it in charge from our fathers to cherish your



Marquis de Lafayette.

name and your virtues.

You will account it an instance of your good fortune, Sir, that you crossed the seas to visit us at a time which enables you to be present at this solemnity. You now behold the field, the renown of which reached you in the heart of France, and caused a thrill in your ardent bosom. You see the lines of the little redoubt thrown up by the incredible diligence of Prescott; defended, to the last ex-

tremitv, by his lion-hearted valor; and within which the corner-stone of our monument has now taken its position. You see where Warren fell, and where Parker, Gardner, McCleary, Moore, and other early patriots, fell with him. Those who survived that day, and whose lives have been prolonged to the present hour, are now around you. Some of them you have known in the trying scenes of the war. Behold! they now stretch forth their feeble arms to embrace you. Behold! they raise their trembling voices to invoke the blessing of God on you and yours forever.

Sir, you have assisted us in laying the foundation of this structure. You have heard us rehearse, with our feeble commendation, the names of departed patriots. Monuments and eulogy belong to the dead. We give them this day to Warren and his associates. On other occasions they have been given to your more immediate companions in arms, to Washington, to Greene, to Gates, to Sullivan, and to Lincoln. We have become reluctant to grant these, our highest and last honors, further. We would gladly hold them yet back from the little remnant of that immortal band. *Serus in cælum redeas.*¹ Illustrious as are your merits, yet far, oh, very far distant be the day when any inscription shall bear your name, or any tongue pronounce its eulogy!

The leading reflection to which this occasion seems to invite us respects the great changes which have happened in the fifty years since the battle of Bunker Hill was fought. And it peculiarly marks the character of the present age, that, in looking at these changes, and in estimating their effect on our condition, we are obliged to consider, not what has been done in our own country only, but in others also. In these interesting times, while nations are making separate and individual advances in improvement, they make, too, a common progress; like vessels on a common tide, propelled by the gales at different rates, according to their several structure and management, but all moved forward by one mighty current, strong enough to bear onward whatever does not sink beneath it.

A chief distinction of the present day is a community of opinions and knowledge amongst men in different nations, existing in a degree heretofore unknown.

¹ Late may you return to the sky.

The common
progress of
nations.

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Knowledge has, in our time, triumphed, and is triumphing, over distance, over difference of languages, over diversity of habits, over prejudice, and over bigotry. The civilized and Christian world is fast learning the great lesson, that difference of nation does not imply necessary hostility, and that all contact need not be war. The whole world is becoming a common field for intellect to act in. Energy of mind, genius, power, where-soever it exists, may speak out in any tongue, and the world will hear it. A great chord of sentiment and feeling runs through two continents, and vibrates over both. Every breeze wafts intelligence from country to country; every wave rolls it; all give it forth, and all in turn receive it. There is a vast commerce of ideas; there are marts and exchanges for intellectual discoveries, and a wonderful fellowship of those individual intelligences which make up the mind and opinion of the age. Mind is the great lever of all things; human thought is the process by which human ends are ultimately answered; and the diffusion of knowledge, so astonishing in the last half-century, has rendered innumerable minds, variously gifted by nature, competent to be competitors or fellow-workers on the theatre of intellectual operation.

The great wheel of political revolution began to move in America. Here its rotation was guarded, regular, and safe. Transferred to the other continent, from unfortunate but natural causes, it received an irregular and violent impulse; it whirled along with a fearful celerity; till at length, like the chariot-wheels in the races of antiquity, it took fire from the rapidity of its own motion, and blazed onward, spreading conflagration and terror around.

**Influence of
the American Revolution upon
Europe.**

We learn from the result of this experiment, how fortunate was our own condition, and how admirably the character of our people was calculated for setting the great example of popular governments. The possession of power did not turn the heads of the American people, for they had long been in the habit of exercising a great degree of self-control. Although the paramount authority of the parent state existed over them, yet a large field of legislation had always been open to our Colonial assemblies. They were accustomed to representative bodies and the forms of free government; they understood the doctrine of the division of power among different branches, and the necessity of checks on each. The character of our countrymen, moreover, was sober, moral, and religious; and there was little in the change to shock their feelings of justice and humanity, or even to disturb an honest prejudice. We had no domestic throne to overturn, no privileged orders to cast down, no violent changes of property to encounter. In the American Revolution, no man sought or wished for more than to defend and enjoy his own. None hoped for plunder or for spoil. Rapacity was unknown to it; the axe was not among the instruments of its accomplishment; and we all know that it could not have lived a single day under any well-founded imputation of possessing a tendency adverse to the Christian religion.

It need not surprise us, that, under circumstances less auspicious, political revolutions elsewhere, even when well intended, have terminated differently. It is, indeed, a great achievement, it is the master-work of the world, to establish governments entirely popular on lasting foundations; nor is it easy, indeed, to introduce the popular principle at all into governments to which it has been altogether a stranger. It cannot be doubted,

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however, that Europe has come out of the contest, in which she has been so long engaged, with greatly superior knowledge, and, in many respects, in a highly improved condition. Whatever benefit has been acquired is likely to be retained, for it consists mainly in the acquisition of more enlightened ideas. And although kingdoms and provinces may be wrested from the hands that hold them, in the same manner they were obtained; although ordinary and vulgar power may, in human affairs, be lost as it has been won; yet it is the glorious prerogative of the empire of knowledge, that what it gains it never loses. On the contrary, it increases by the multiple of its power; all its ends become means; all its attainments, helps to new conquests. Its whole abundant harvest is but so much seed wheat, and nothing has limited, and nothing can limit the amount of ultimate product.

Under the influence of this rapidly increasing knowledge, the people have begun, in all forms of government, to think and to reason on affairs of state. Regarding government as an institution for the public good, they demand a knowledge of its operations, and a participation in its exercise. A call for the representative system, wherever it is not enjoyed, and where there is already intelligence enough to estimate its value, is perseveringly made. Where men may speak out, they demand it; where the bayonet is at their throats, they pray for it.

We may hope that the growing influence of enlightened sentiment will promote the permanent peace of the world. Wars to maintain family alliances, to uphold or to cast down dynasties, and to regulate successions to thrones, which have occupied so much room in the his-

tory of modern times, if not less likely to happen at all, will be less likely to become general and involve many nations, as the great principle shall be more and more established, that the interest of the world is peace, and its first great statute that every nation possesses the power of establishing a government for itself. But public opinion has attained also an influence over governments which do not admit the popular principle into their organization. A necessary respect for the judgment of the world operates, in some measure, as a control over the most unlimited forms of authority. It is owing, perhaps, to this truth, that the interesting struggle of the Greeks has been suffered to go on so long, without a direct interference, either to wrest that country from its present masters, or to execute the system of pacification by force, and, with united strength, lay the neck of Christian and civilized Greek at the foot of the barbarian Turk. Let us thank God that we live in an age when something has influence besides the bayonet, and when the sternest authority does not venture to encounter the scorching power of public reproach. Any attempt of the kind I have mentioned should be met by one universal burst of indignation; the air of the civilized world ought to be made too warm to be comfortably breathed by any one who would hazard it.

Respect for
the judgment
of the world.

It is, indeed, a touching reflection, that, while, in the fulness of our country's happiness, we rear this monument to her honor, we look for instruction in our undertaking to a country which is now in fearful contest, not for works of art or memorials of glory, but for her own existence.¹ Let her

The Greek
struggle
for inde-
pendence.

¹ The people of Greece, long restive against Turkish oppression, rose under Alexander Ypsilanti in 1820, promulgated a new constitu-

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be assured that she is not forgotten in the world; that her efforts are applauded, and that constant prayers ascend for her success. And let us cherish a confident hope for her final triumph. If the true spark of religious and civil liberty be kindled, it will burn. Human agency cannot extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire, it may be smothered for a time; the ocean may overwhelm it; mountains may press it down; but its inherent and unconquerable force will heave both the ocean and the land, and at some time or other, in some place or other, the volcano will break out and flame up to heaven.

When the battle of Bunker Hill was fought, the existence of South America was scarcely felt in the civilized world. The thirteen little Colonies of North America habitually called themselves the "Continent." Borne down by Colonial subjugation, monopoly, and bigotry, these vast regions of the South were hardly visible above the horizon. But in our day there has been, as it were, a new creation. The southern hemisphere emerges from the sea. Its lofty mountains begin to lift themselves into the light of heaven; its broad and fertile plains stretch out, in

tion in 1822, and began a war of revolution. After bloody atrocities on both sides, in 1824 the Greeks began to receive some outside help, including that of Lord Byron, who died at Missolonghi, in that year, from exposure in the field. The jealousies and intrigues of Mahmoud, Sultan of Turkey, and Mehemet Ali, Turkish Viceroy of Egypt, with fears of Russian preponderance in a divided Turkey, led the Great Powers of Europe to interfere in behalf of Greece, as the Turks and Egyptians were working together against her. The Treaty of London (July 6, 1827) founded the new Kingdom of Greece; England, France, and Russia overwhelmed the fleets of Turkey and Egypt at Navarino, October 26 of the same year; and the independent career of the resuscitated Greek nation began.

beauty, to the eye of civilized man, and at the mighty bidding of the voice of political liberty the waters of darkness retire.

And, now, let us indulge an honest exultation in the conviction of the benefit which the example of our country has produced, and is likely to produce, on human freedom and human happiness. Let us endeavor to comprehend in all its magnitude, and to feel in all its importance, the part assigned to us in the great drama of human affairs. We are placed at the head of the system of representative and popular governments. Thus far our example shows that such governments are compatible not only with respectability and power, but with repose, with peace, with security of personal rights, with good laws, and a just administration.

The example
of the
republic of
the United
States.

We are not propagandists. Wherever other systems are preferred, either as being thought better in themselves, or as better suited to existing condition, we leave the preference to be enjoyed. Our history hitherto proves, however, that the popular form is practicable, and that with wisdom and knowledge men may govern themselves: and the duty incumbent on us is to preserve the consistency of this cheering example, and take care that nothing may weaken its authority with the world. If, in our case, the representative system ultimately fail, popular governments must be pronounced impossible. No combination of circumstances more favorable to the experiment can ever be expected to occur. The last hopes of mankind, therefore, rest with us; and if it should be proclaimed that our example had become an argument against the experiment, the knell of popular liberty would be sounded throughout the earth.

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These are excitements to duty; but they are not suggestions of doubt. Our history and our condition, all that is gone before us, and all that surrounds us, authorize the belief that popular governments, though subject to occasional variations, in form perhaps not always for the better, may yet, in their general character, be as durable and permanent as other systems. We know, indeed, that in our country any other is impossible. The *principle* of free governments adheres to the American soil. It is bedded in it, immovable as its mountains.

And let the sacred obligations which have devolved on this generation, and on us, sink deep into our hearts.

The obligations of Americans. Those who established our liberty and our government are daily dropping from among us. The great trust now descends to new hands. Let us apply ourselves to that which is presented to us, as our appropriate object. We can win no laurels in a war for independence. Earlier and worthier hands have gathered them all. Nor are there places for us by the side of Solon, and Alfred, and other founders of states. Our fathers have filled them. But there remains to us a great duty of defence and preservation; and there is open to us, also, a noble pursuit, to which the spirit of the times strongly invites us. Our proper business is improvement. Let our age be the age of improvement. In a day of peace, let us advance the arts of peace and the works of peace. Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered. Let us cultivate a true spirit of union and harmony. In pursuing the great objects which our condition points out to

us, let us act under a settled conviction, and an habitual feeling, that these twenty-four States are one country. Let our conceptions be enlarged to the circle of our duties. Let us extend our ideas over the whole of the vast field in which we are called to act. Let our object be, OUR COUNTRY, OUR WHOLE COUNTRY, AND NOTHING BUT OUR COUNTRY. And, by the blessing of God, may that country itself become a vast and splendid monument, not of oppression and terror, but of Wisdom, of Peace, and of Liberty, upon which the world may gaze with admiration forever!

THE COMPLETION OF THE BUNKER HILL MONUMENT

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED JUNE 17, 1843



Bunker Hill Monument.

[It was determined by the directors of the Bunker Hill Monument Association, that the completion of the work should be celebrated in a manner not less imposing than that in which the laying of the corner-stone had been celebrated, seventeen years before. The co-operation of Mr. Webster was again invited, and, notwithstanding the pressure of his engagements as Secretary of State at Washington, was again patriotically yielded. The President of the United States and his Cabinet had accepted invitations to be present; and delegations of the descendants of New England attended from all parts of the Union, including one hundred and eight surviving veterans of the Revolution, among whom were some who were in the battle of Bunker Hill. According to the estimate of Richard Frothingham, one hundred thousand persons were gathered, and nearly half that number are

supposed to have been within the reach of the orator's voice. The ground rises slightly between the platform and the Monument Square, so that the whole of this concourse, compactly crowded together, was within the full view of the speaker. When, after saying, "It is not from my lips, it could not be from any human lips, that that strain of eloquence is this day to flow most competent to move and excite the vast multitudes around me, — the powerful speaker stands motionless before us," Mr. Webster paused, and pointed to the monument, the audience burst into long and loud applause. It was some moments before he could go on with his address.]

A DUTY has been performed. A work of gratitude and patriotism is completed. This structure, having its

Completion of Bunker Hill Monument 51

foundations in soil which drank deep of early Revolutionary blood, has at length reached its destined height, and now lifts its summit to the skies.

Time and nature have had their course in diminishing the number of those whom we met here on the 17th of June, 1825. Most of the Revolutionary characters then present have since deceased; and Lafayette sleeps in his native land. Yet the name and blood of Warren are with us; the kindred of Putnam are also here; and near me, universally beloved for his character and his virtues, and now venerable for his years, sits the son of the noble-hearted and daring Prescott.

The change;
of eighteen
years.

The Bunker Hill Monument is finished. Here it stands.¹ Fortunate in the high natural eminence on

¹ "Monument Square is four hundred and seventeen feet from north to south, and four hundred feet from east to west, and contains nearly six acres. It embraces the whole site of the redoubt, and a part of the site of the breastwork. According to the most accurate plan of the town and the battle (Page's), the monument stands where the south-west angle of the redoubt was, and the whole of the redoubt was between the monument and the street that bounds it on the west. The small mound in the northeast corner of the square is supposed to be the remains of the breastwork. Warren fell about two hundred feet west of the monument. An iron fence encloses the square, and another surrounds the monument. The square has entrances on each of its sides, and at each of its corners, and is surrounded by a walk and rows of trees.

"The obelisk is thirty feet in diameter at the base, about fifteen feet at the top of the truncated part, and was designed to be two hundred and twenty feet high; but the mortar and the seams between the stones make the precise height two hundred and twenty-one feet. Within the shaft is a hollow cone, with a spiral stairway winding round it to its summit, which enters a circular chamber at the top. There are ninety courses of stone in the shaft,—six of them below the ground, and eighty-four above the ground. The capstone, or apex, is a single stone four feet square at the base, and three feet six inches in height, weighing two and a half tons."—FROTHINGHAM'S *Siege of Boston*.

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which it is placed, higher, infinitely higher in its objects and purpose, it rises over the land and over the sea; and visible at their homes to three hundred thousand of the people of Massachusetts, it stands a memorial of the last, and a monitor to the present, and to all succeeding generations. I have spoken of the loftiness of its purpose. If it had been without any other design than the creation of a work of art, the granite of which it is composed would have slept in its native bed. It has a purpose, and that purpose gives it its character. That purpose enrobes it with dignity and moral grandeur. That well-known purpose it is which causes us to look up to it with a feeling of awe. It is itself the orator of this occasion. It is not from my lips, it could not be from any human lips, that that strain of eloquence is this day to flow most competent to move and excite the vast multitudes around me. The powerful speaker stands motionless before us. It is a plain shaft. It bears no inscriptions, fronting to the rising sun, from which the future antiquary shall wipe the dust. Nor does the rising sun cause tones of music to issue from its summit. But at the rising of the sun, and at the setting of the sun; in the blaze of noonday, and beneath the milder effulgence of lunar light; it looks, it speaks, it acts, to the full comprehension of every American mind, and the awakening of glowing enthusiasm in every American heart. Its silent, but awful utterance; its deep pathos, as it brings to our contemplation the 17th of June, 1775, and the consequences which have resulted to us, to our country, and to the world, from the events of that day, and which we know must continue to rain influence on the destinies of mankind to the end of time; the elevation with which it raises us high above the ordinary feel-

**The purpose
of the
monument.**

Completion of Bunker Hill Monument 53

ings of life, — surpass all that the study of the closet, or even the inspiration of genius, can produce. To-day it speaks to us. Its future auditories will be the successive generations of men, as they rise up before it and gather around it. Its speech will be of patriotism and courage; of civil and religious liberty; of free government; of the moral improvement and elevation of mankind; and of the immortal memory of those who, with heroic devotion, have sacrificed their lives for their country.

In the older world, numerous fabrics still exist, reared by human hands, but whose object has been lost in the darkness of ages. They are now
monuments of nothing but the labor and skill which constructed them.

The monuments of the past.

The mighty pyramid itself, half buried in the sands of Africa, has nothing to bring down and report to us but the power of kings and the servitude of the people. If it had any purpose beyond that of a mausoleum, such purpose has perished from history and from tradition. If asked for its moral object, its admonition, its sentiment, its instruction to mankind, or any high end in its erection, it is silent; silent as the millions which lie in the dust at its base, and in the catacombs which surround it. Without a just moral object, therefore, made known to man, though raised against the skies, it excites only conviction of power, mixed with strange wonder. But if the civilization of the present race of men, founded, as it is, in solid science, the true knowledge of nature, and vast discoveries in art, and which is elevated and purified by moral sentiment and by the truths of Christianity, be not destined to destruction before the final termination of human existence on earth, the object and purpose of this edifice will be known till that hour shall come. And even if civilization

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should be subverted, and the truths of the Christian religion obscured by a new deluge of barbarism, the memory of Bunker Hill and the American Revolution will still be elements and parts of the knowledge

which shall be possessed by the last man to whom the light of civilization and Christianity shall be extended.



John Tyler.

This celebration is honored by the presence of the chief executive magistrate of the Union. An occasion so national in its object and character, and so much connected with that Revolution from which the government sprang at the head of which he is placed, may well re-

ceive from him this mark of attention and respect. Well acquainted with Yorktown, the scene of the last great military struggle of the Revolution, his eye now surveys the field of Bunker Hill, the theatre of the first of those important conflicts. He sees where Warren fell, where Putnam, and Prescott, and Stark, and Knowlton, and Brooks fought. He beholds the spot where a thousand trained soldiers of England were smitten to the earth, in the first effort of revolutionary war, by the arm of a bold and determined yeomanry, contending for liberty and their country.

President
Tyler.

Completion of Bunker Hill Monument 55

Banners and badges, processions and flags, announce to us, that amidst this uncounted throng are thousands of natives of New England now residents in other States. Welcome, ye kindred names, with kindred blood! From the broad savannas of the South, from the newer regions of the West, from amidst the hundreds of thousands of men of Eastern origin who cultivate the rich valley of the Genesee or live along the chain of the lakes, from the mountains of Pennsylvania, and from the thronged cities of the coast, welcome, welcome! Wherever else you may be strangers, here you are all at home. You assemble at this shrine of liberty, near the family altars at which your earliest devotions were paid to Heaven, near to the temples of worship first entered by you, and near to the schools and colleges in which your education was received. You come hither with a glorious ancestry of liberty. You bring names which are on the rolls of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill. You come, some of you, once more to be embraced by an aged Revolutionary father, or to receive another, perhaps a last, blessing, bestowed in love and tears by a mother yet surviving to witness and to enjoy your prosperity and happiness.

Visitors
present at
the dedica-
tion.

But if family associations and the recollections of the past bring you hither with greater alacrity, and mingle with your greeting much of local attachment and private affection, greeting also be given, free and hearty greeting, to every American citizen who treads this sacred soil with patriotic feeling, and respire with pleasure in an atmosphere perfumed with the recollections of 1775! This occasion is respectable, nay, it is grand, it is sublime, by the nationality of its sentiment. Among the seventeen millions of happy people who

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form the American community there is not one who has not an interest in this monument, as there is not one that has not a deep and abiding interest in that which it commemorates.

Woe betide the man who brings to this day's worship feeling less than wholly American! Woe betide the man who can stand here with the fires of local resentments burning, or the purpose of fomenting local jealousies and the strifes of local interests festering and rankling in his heart! Union, established in justice, in patriotism, and the most plain and obvious common interest, — union, founded on the same love of liberty, cemented by blood shed in the same common cause, — union has been the source of all our glory and greatness thus far, and is the ground of all our highest hopes. This column stands on Union. I know not that it might not keep its position, if the American Union, in the mad conflict of human passions, and in the strife of parties and factions, should be broken up and destroyed. I know not that it would totter and fall to the earth, and mingle its fragments with the fragments of Liberty and the Constitution, when state should be separated from state, and faction and dismemberment obliterate forever all the hopes of the founders of our republic, and the great inheritance of their children. It might stand. But who, from beneath the weight of mortification and shame that would oppress him, could look up to behold it? Whose eyeballs would not be seared by such a spectacle? For my part, should I live to such a time, I shall avert my eyes from it forever.

It is not as a mere military encounter of hostile armies that the battle of Bunker Hill presents its principal claim to attention. Yet even as a mere battle

there were circumstances attending it extraordinary in character, and entitling it to peculiar distinction. It was fought on this eminence; in the neighborhood of yonder city; in the presence of many more spectators than there were combatants in the conflict. Men, women, and children, from every commanding position, were gazing at the battle, and looking for its results with all the eagerness natural to those who knew that the issue was fraught with the deepest consequences to themselves, personally, as well as to their country. Yet, on the 16th of June, 1775, there was nothing around this hill but verdure and culture. There was, indeed, the note of awful preparation in Boston. There was the Provincial army at Cambridge, with its right flank resting on Dorchester, and its left on Chelsea. But here all was peace. Tranquillity reigned around. On the 17th, everything was changed. On this eminence had arisen, in the night, a redoubt, built by Prescott, and in which he held command. Perceived by the enemy at dawn, it was immediately cannonaded from the floating batteries in the river, and from the opposite shore. And then ensued the hurried movement in Boston, and soon the troops of Britain embarked in the attempt to dislodge the Colonists. In an hour everything indicated an immediate and bloody conflict. Love of liberty on one side, proud defiance of rebellion on the other, hopes and fears, and courage and daring, on both sides, animated the hearts of the combatants as they hung on the edge of battle.

Importance
of the battle
of Bunker
Hill.

I suppose it would be difficult, in a military point of view, to ascribe to the leaders on either side any just motive for the engagement which followed. On the one hand, it could not have been very important to the Americans to attempt to hem the British within the

town, by advancing one single post a quarter of a mile ; while, on the other hand, if the British found it essential to dislodge the American troops, they had it in their power at no expense of life. By moving up their ships and batteries, they could have completely cut off all communication with the mainland over the Neck, and the forces in the redoubt would have been reduced to a state of famine in forty-eight hours.

The motive for the engagement. But that was not the day for any such consideration on either side ! Both parties were anxious to try the strength of their arms. The pride of England would not permit the rebels, as she termed them, to defy her to the teeth ; and, without for a moment calculating the cost, the British general determined to destroy the fort immediately. On the other side, Prescott and his gallant followers longed and thirsted for a decisive trial of strength and of courage. They wished a battle, and wished it at once. And this is the true secret of the movements on this hill.

I will not attempt to describe that battle. The cannonading ; the landing of the British ; their advance ; the coolness with which the charge was met ; the repulse ; the second attack ; the second repulse ; the burning of Charlestown ; and, finally, the closing assault, and the slow retreat of the Americans, — the history of all these is familiar.

But the consequences of the battle of Bunker Hill were greater than those of any ordinary conflict, although between armies of far greater force, and terminating with more immediate advantage on the one side or the other. It was the first great battle of the Revolution ; and not only the first blow, but the blow which determined the contest. It did not, indeed, put an end to the war,

but in the then existing hostile state of feeling, the difficulties could only be referred to the arbitration of the sword. And one thing is certain: that after the New England troops had shown themselves able to face and repulse the regulars, it was decided that peace never could be established, but upon the basis of the independence of the Colonies. When the sun of that day went down, the event of Independence was no longer doubtful. In a few days Washington heard of the battle, and he inquired if the militia had stood the fire of the regulars. When told that they had not only stood that fire, but reserved their own till the enemy was within eight rods, and then poured it in with tremendous effect, "Then," exclaimed he, "the liberties of the country are safe!"

The consequences of the battle.

The Mayflower sought our shores under no high-wrought spirit of commercial adventure, no love of gold, no mixture of purpose warlike or hostile to any human being. Like the dove from the ark she had put forth only to find rest. Solemn supplications on the shore of the sea, in Holland, had invoked for her, at her departure, the blessings of Providence. The stars which guided her were the unobscured constellations of civil and religious liberty. Her deck was the altar of the living God. Fervent prayers on bended knees mingled, morning and evening, with the voices of ocean, and the sighing of the wind in her shrouds. Every prosperous breeze which, gently swelling her sails, helped the Pilgrims onward in their course, awoke new anthems of praise; and when the elements were wrought into fury, neither the tempest, tossing their fragile bark like a feather, nor the darkness and howling of the midnight storm, ever dis-

The purposes of the Pilgrims of Plymouth.

turbed, in man or woman, the firm and settled purpose of their souls, to undergo all, and to do all, that the meekest patience, the boldest resolution, and the highest trust in God could enable human beings to suffer or to perform.

The Colonists of English America were of the people, and a people already free. They were of the middle, industrious, and already prosperous class, the inhabitants of commercial and manufacturing cities, among whom liberty first revived and respired, after a sleep of a thousand years in the bosom of the Dark Ages. Spain descended on the New World in the armed and terrible image of her monarchy and her soldiery; England approached it in the winning and popular garb of personal rights, public protection, and civil freedom. England transplanted liberty to America; Spain transplanted power. England, through the agency of private companies and the efforts of individuals, colonized this part of North America by industrious individuals, making their own way in the wilderness, defending themselves against the savages, recognizing their right to the soil, and with a general honest purpose of introducing knowledge as well as Christianity among them. Spain stooped on South America like a vulture on its prey. Everything was force. Territories were acquired by fire and sword. Cities were destroyed by fire and sword. Hundreds of thousands of human beings fell by fire and sword. Even conversion to Christianity was attempted by fire and sword.

Behold, then, fellow-citizens, the difference resulting from the operation of the two principles! Here, to-day, on the summit of Bunker Hill, and at the foot of this

English
liberty and
Spanish
greed.

Completion of Bunker Hill Monument 61

monument, behold the difference! I would that the fifty thousand voices present could proclaim it with a shout which should be heard over the globe.

Our inheritance was of liberty, secured and regulated by law, and enlightened by religion and knowledge; that of South America was of power, stern, unrelenting, tyrannical, military power. And now look to the consequences of the two principles on the general and aggregate happiness of the human race. Behold the results in all the regions conquered by Cortéz and Pizarro, and the contrasted results here. I suppose the territory of the United States may amount to one-eighth, or one-tenth, of that colonized by Spain on this continent; and yet in all that vast region there are but between one and two millions of people of European color and European blood, while in the United States there are fourteen millions who rejoice in their descent from the people of the more northern part of Europe.

The consequences of the two principles.

The great elements of the American system of government, originally introduced by the Colonists, and which were early in operation, and ready to be developed, more and more, as the progress of events should justify or demand, were, —

The seeds of government sown by the Colonists.

Escape from the existing political systems of Europe, including its religious hierarchies, but the continued possession and enjoyment of its science and arts, its literature, and its manners;

Home government, or the power of making in the Colony the municipal laws which were to govern it;

Equality of rights;

Representative assemblies, or forms of government founded on popular elections.

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Few topics are more inviting, or more fit for philosophical discussion, than the effect on the happiness of mankind of institutions founded upon these principles; or, in other words, the influence of the New World upon the Old.

Her obligations to Europe for science and art, laws, literature, and manners, America acknowledges, as she ought, with respect and gratitude. The people of the United States, descendants of the English stock, grateful for the treasures of knowledge derived from their English ancestors, admit also, with thanks and filial regard, that among those ancestors, under the culture of Hampden and Sydney and other assiduous friends, that seed of popular liberty first germinated which on our soil has shot up to its full height, until its branches overshadow all the land.

But America has not failed to make returns. If she has not wholly cancelled the obligation, or equalled it by others of like weight, she has, at least, made respectable advances towards repaying the debt. And she admits that, standing in the midst of civilized nations, and in a civilized age, a nation among nations, there is a high part which she is expected to act, for the general advancement of human interests and human welfare.

American mines have filled the mints of Europe with the precious metals. The productions of the American soil and climate have poured out their abundance of luxuries for the tables of the rich, and of necessities for the sustenance of the poor. Birds and animals of beauty and value have been added to the European stocks; and transplantations from the unequalled riches of our forests have mingled themselves profusely with the elms, and ashes, and Druidical oaks of England.

**American
institutions.**

**America's
contributions
to European
welfare.**

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America has made contributions to Europe far more important. Who can estimate the amount, or the value, of the augmentation of the commerce of the world that has resulted from America? Who can imagine to himself what would now be the shock to the Eastern Continent, if the Atlantic were no longer traversable, or if there were no longer American productions or American markets?

But America exercises influences, or holds out examples, for the consideration of the Old World, of a much higher, because they are of a moral and political character.

The American example.

America has furnished to Europe proof of the fact that popular institutions, founded on equality and the principle of representation, are capable of maintaining governments able to secure the rights of person, property, and reputation.

America has proved that it is practicable to elevate the mass of mankind, — that portion which in Europe is called the laboring, or lower class; — to raise them to self-respect, to make them competent to act a part in the great right and great duty of self-government; and she has proved that this may be done by education and the diffusion of knowledge. She holds out an example, a thousand times more encouraging than ever was presented before, to those nine-tenths of the human race who are born without hereditary fortune or hereditary rank.

America has furnished to the world the character of Washington! And if our American institutions had done nothing else, that alone would have entitled them to the respect of mankind.

The character of Washington.

Washington! “First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen!” Washington is all

our own! The enthusiastic veneration and regard in which the people of the United States hold him, prove them to be worthy of such a countryman; while his reputation abroad reflects the highest honor on his country. I would cheerfully put the question to-day to the intelligence of Europe and the world, what character of the century, upon the whole, stands out, in the relief of history, most pure, most respectable, most sublime; and I doubt not that, by a suffrage approaching to unanimity, the answer would be Washington!

The structure now standing before us, by its uprightness, its solidity, its durability, is no unfit emblem of his character. His public virtues and public principles were as firm as the earth on which it stands; his personal motives as pure as the serene heaven in which its summit is lost. But, indeed, though a fit, it is an inadequate emblem. Towering high above the column which our hands have builded; beheld, not by the inhabitants of a single city or a single State, but by all the families of man, ascends the colossal grandeur of the character and life of Washington. In all the constituents of the one, in all the acts of the other, in all its titles to immortal love, admiration, and renown, it is an American production. It is the embodiment and vindication of our transatlantic liberty. Born upon our soil, of parents also born upon it; never for a moment having had sight of the Old World; instructed, according to the modes of his time, only in the spare, plain, but wholesome elementary knowledge which our institutions provide for the children of the people; growing up beneath, and penetrated by, the genuine influences of American society; living from infancy to manhood and age amidst our expanding but not luxurious civilization; partaking in our great destiny

Completion of Bunker Hill Monument 65

of labor, our long contest with unreclaimed nature and uncivilized man, our agony of glory, the war of Independence, our great victory of peace, the formation of the Union, and the establishment of the Constitution, — he is all, all our own! Washington is ours. That crowded and glorious life, —

“Where multitudes of virtues passed along,
Each pressing foremost, in the mighty throng
Ambitious to be seen, then making room
For greater multitudes that were to come,” —

that life was the life of an American citizen.

I claim him for America. In all the perils, in every darkened moment of the state, in the midst of the reproaches of enemies and the misgiving of friends, I turn to that transcendent name for courage and for consolation. To him who denies or doubts whether our fervid liberty can be combined with law, with order, with the security of property, with the pursuits and advancement of happiness; to him who denies that our forms of government are capable of producing exaltation of soul, and the passion of true glory; to him who denies that we have contributed anything to the stock of great lessons and great examples; — to all these I reply by pointing to Washington!

And now, friends and fellow-citizens, it is time to bring this discourse to a close.

We have indulged in gratifying recollections of the past, in the prosperity and pleasures of the present, and in high hopes for the future. But let us remember that we have duties and obligations to perform, corresponding to the blessings which we enjoy. Let us remember the trust, the sacred trust, attaching to the rich inheritance which we have

The obligations of
Americans.

received from our fathers. Let us feel our personal responsibility, to the full extent of our power and influence, for the preservation of the principles of civil and religious liberty. And let us remember that it is only religion, and morals, and knowledge, that can make men respectable and happy, under any form of government. Let us hold fast the great truth, that communities are responsible, as well as individuals; that no government is respectable which is not just; that without unspotted purity of public faith, without sacred public principle, fidelity, and honor, no mere forms of government, no machinery of laws, can give dignity to political society. In our day and generation let us seek to raise and improve the moral sentiment, so that we may look not for a degraded, but for an elevated and improved future. And when both we and our children shall have been consigned to the house appointed for all living, may love of country and pride of country glow with equal fervor among those to whom our names and our blood shall have descended! And then, when honored and decrepit age shall lean against the base of this monument, and troops of ingenuous youth shall be gathered round it, and when the one shall speak to the other of its objects, the purposes of its construction, and the great and glorious events with which it is connected, there shall rise from every youthful breast the ejaculation, "Thank God, I—I also — AM AN AMERICAN!"

ADAMS AND JEFFERSON

A DISCOURSE IN COMMEMORATION OF THE LIVES AND SERVICES OF JOHN ADAMS AND THOMAS JEFFERSON; DELIVERED IN FANEUIL HALL, BOSTON, AUGUST 2, 1826

[Since the death of Washington, on the 14th of December, 1799, the public mind had never been so powerfully affected by any similar event as by the death of John Adams, on the 4th of July, 1826. The news reached Boston in the evening of that day. It acquired a singular interest from the year and the day on which it took place;—the 4th of July of the year completing the half-century from the Declaration of Independence, a measure in which Mr. Adams himself had taken so distinguished a part. The emotions of the public were greatly increased by the indications given by Mr. Adams in his last hours, that he was fully aware that the day was the anniversary of Independence, and by his dying allusion to the supposed fact that his colleague, Jefferson, survived him. When, in the course of a few days, the news arrived from Virginia, that Jefferson also had died on the same day and a few hours before Mr. Adams, the patriotic emotions of the country at large were touched beyond all example. The occurrence was justly deemed without a parallel in history. The various circumstances of association and coincidence which marked the characters and careers of these great men, and especially their simultaneous decease on the 4th of July, were dwelt upon with deep interest. The circles of private life, the press, public bodies, and the pulpit, were for some time almost engrossed with the topic; and exercises of commemoration were held throughout the country.]

THIS is an unaccustomed spectacle. For the first time, fellow-citizens, badges of mourning shroud the columns and overhang the arches of this hall. These walls, which were consecrated, so long ago, to the cause of American liberty, which witnessed her infant struggles,

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and rung with the shouts of her earliest victories, proclaim, now, that distinguished friends and champions of that great cause have fallen. It is right that it should be thus. The tears which flow, and the honors that are paid, when the founders of the republic die, give hope



Faneuil Hall.

that the republic itself may be immortal. It is fit that, by public assembly and solemn observance, by anthem and by eulogy, we commemorate the services of national benefactors, extol their virtues, and render thanks to God for eminent blessings, early given and long continued, through their agency, to our favored country.

Adams and Jefferson are no more; and we are assembled, fellow-citizens, the aged, the middle-aged, and the young, by the spontaneous impulse of all, under the authority of the municipal government, with the presence of the chief magistrate of the Commonwealth, and others its official representatives, the University, and the learned societies, to bear our part in those manifestations of respect and gratitude which pervade the whole land. Adams and Jefferson are no more. On our fiftieth anniversary, the great day of national jubilee, in the very hour of public rejoicing, in the midst of echoing and re-echoing voices of thanksgiving, while their own names were on all tongues, they took their flight together to the world of spirits.

If it be true that no one can safely be pronounced happy while he lives, if that event which terminates life can alone crown its honors and its glory, An epic consummation. what felicity is here! The great epic of their lives, how happily concluded! Poetry itself has hardly terminated illustrious lives, and finished the career of earthly renown, by such a consummation. If we had the power, we could not wish to reverse this dispensation of the Divine Providence. The great objects of life were accomplished, the drama was ready to be closed. It has closed; our patriots have fallen; but so fallen, at such age, with such coincidence, on such a day, that we cannot rationally lament that the end has come which we knew could not be long deferred.

Neither of these great men, fellow-citizens, could have died, at any time, without leaving an immense void in our American society. They have been so intimately, and for so long a time, blended with the history of the country, and especially so united, in our thoughts and recollections, with the events of the Revolution, that the death of either would have touched the chords of public sympathy. We should have felt that one great link connecting us with former times was broken; that we had lost something more, as it were, of the presence of the Revolution itself, and of the act of independence, and were driven on, by another great remove from the days of our country's early distinction, to meet posterity, and to mix with the future. Like the mariner, whom the currents of the ocean and the winds carry along, till he sees the stars which have directed his course and lighted his pathless way descend, one by one, beneath the rising horizon, we should have felt that the stream of time had borne us onward till another great luminary, whose light had cheered us

and whose guidance we had followed, had sunk away from our sight.

But the concurrence of their death on the anniversary of Independence has naturally awakened stronger emotions. Both had been Presidents, both had lived to great age, both were early patriots, and both were distinguished and ever honored by their immediate agency in the act of independence. It cannot but seem striking and extraordinary that these two should live to see the fiftieth year from the date of that act; that they should complete that year; and that then, on the day which had fast linked forever their own fame with their country's glory, the heavens should open to receive them both at once. As their lives themselves were the gifts of Providence, who is not willing to recognize in their happy termination, as well as in their long continuance, proofs that our country and its benefactors are objects of His care?

Adams and Jefferson, I have said, are no more. As human beings, indeed, they are no more. They are no more, as in 1776, bold and fearless advocates of independence; no more, as at subsequent periods, the head of the government; no more, as we have recently seen them, aged and venerable objects of admiration and regard. They are no more. They are dead. But how little is there of the great and good which can die! To their country they yet live, and live forever. They live in all that perpetuates the remembrance of men on earth; in the recorded proofs of their own great actions, in the offspring of their intellect, in the deep-engraved lines of public gratitude, and in the respect and homage of mankind. They live in their example; and they live, emphatically, and will

The remarkable similarity between Adams and Jefferson in their lives and in their deaths.

Their example.

live, in the influence which their lives and efforts, their principles and opinions, now exercise, and will continue to exercise, on the affairs of men, not only in their own country, but throughout the civilized world. A superior and commanding human intellect, a truly great man, when Heaven vouchsafes so rare a gift, is not a temporary flame, burning brightly for a while, and then giving place to returning darkness. It is rather a spark of fervent heat, as well as radiant light, with power to enkindle the common mass of human mind; so that when it glimmers in its own decay, and finally goes out in death, no night follows; but it leaves the world all light, all on fire, from the potent contact of its own spirit. Bacon died; but the human understanding, roused by the touch of his miraculous wand to a perception of the true philosophy and the just mode of inquiring after truth, has kept on its course successfully and gloriously. Newton died; yet the courses of the spheres are still known, and they yet move on by the laws which he discovered, and in the orbits which he saw, and described for them, in the infinity of space.

No two men now live, fellow-citizens, perhaps it may be doubted whether any two men have ever lived in one age, who, more than those we now commemorate, have impressed on mankind their own

Their work.

sentiments in regard to politics and government, infused their own opinions more deeply into the opinions of others, or given a more lasting direction to the current of human thought. Their work doth not perish with them. The tree which they assisted to plant will flourish, although they water it and protect it no longer; for it has struck its roots deep, it has sent them to the very centre; no storm, not of force to burst the orb,

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can overturn it; its branches spread wide; they stretch their protecting arms broader and broader, and its top is destined to reach the heavens. We are not deceived. There is no delusion here. No age will come in which the American Revolution will appear less than it is, one of the greatest events in human history. No age will come in which it shall cease to be seen and felt, on either continent, that a mighty step, a great advance, not only in American affairs, but in human affairs, was made on the 4th of July, 1776. And no age will come, we trust, so ignorant or so unjust as not to see and acknowledge the efficient agency of those we now honor in producing that momentous event.

We are not assembled, therefore, fellow-citizens, as men overwhelmed with calamity by the sudden disruption of the ties of friendship or affection, or as in despair for the republic by the untimely blighting of its hopes. Death has not surprised us by an unseasonable blow. We have, indeed, seen the tomb close, but it has closed only over mature years, over long-protracted public service, over the weakness of age, and over life itself only when the ends of living had been fulfilled. These suns, as they rose slowly and steadily, amidst clouds and storms, in their ascendant, so they have not rushed from their meridian to sink suddenly in the west. Like the mildness, the serenity, the continuing benignity of a summer's day, they have gone down with slow-descending, grateful, long-lingering light; and now that they are beyond the visible margin of the world, good omens cheer us from "the bright track of their fiery car"!

The occasion, fellow-citizens, requires some account of the lives and services of John Adams and Thomas

Jefferson. This duty must necessarily be performed with great brevity, and in the discharge of it I shall be obliged to confine myself, principally, to those parts of their history and character which belonged to them as public men.

Their public services.

John Adams was born at Quincy, then part of the ancient town of Braintree, on the nineteenth day of October (Old Style), 1735.¹ He was a descendant of the Puritans, his ancestors having early emigrated from England, and settled in Massachusetts. Discovering in childhood a strong love of reading and of knowledge, together with marks of great strength and activity of mind, proper care was taken by his worthy father to provide for his education. He pursued his youthful studies in Braintree, under Mr. Marsh, a teacher whose fortune it was that Josiah Quincy, Jr., as well as the subject of these remarks, should receive from him his instruction in the rudiments of classical literature. Having been admitted, in 1751, a member of Harvard College, Mr. Adams was graduated, in course, in 1755; and on the catalogue of that institution, his name, at the time of his death, was second among the living Alumni, being preceded only by that of the venerable Holyoke. With what degree of reputation he left the University is not now precisely known.

Adams the chief advocate of the Declaration of Independence.

His education.

¹ The old method, established by Julius Cæsar, of counting 365 days in a year, and 366 every fourth year, gave each year about eleven minutes too much, which overplus amounted in 1582 to ten days. In that year Pope Gregory XIII. discontinued the "Julian" and established the "Gregorian" calendar, by setting forward the date of a day ten days. This change was adopted (the dropping of an additional day being needed) by the English Parliament in 1751, — September 3, 1752, to be called September 14. At present, the New Style gives 366 days to every year divisible by four, excepting 1800, 1900, etc.

We know only that he was distinguished in a class which numbered Locke and Hemmenway among its members.

Choosing the law for his profession, he commenced and prosecuted its studies at Worcester, under the direc-

Studies law. tion of Samuel Putnam, a gentleman whom he has himself described as an acute man, an able and learned lawyer, and as being in large professional practice at that time. In 1758 he was admitted to the bar, and entered upon the practice of the law in Braintree. He is understood to have made his first con-



John Adams.

siderable effort, or to have attained his first signal success, at Plymouth, on one of those occasions which furnish the earliest opportunity for distinction to many young men of the profession, a jury trial, and a criminal cause. His business naturally grew with his reputation, and his residence in the vicinity afforded the opportunity, as his growing eminence gave the power, of entering on a larger

field of practice in the capital. In 1766 he removed his residence to Boston, still continuing his attendance on the neighboring circuits, and not unfrequently called to remote parts of the Province. In 1770 his professional firmness was brought to a test of some severity, on the application of the British officers and soldiers to undertake their defence, on the trial of the indictments found against them on account of the transactions of the memorable

5th of March.¹ He seems to have thought, on this occasion, that a man can no more abandon the proper duties of his profession, than he can abandon other duties. The event proved that as he judged well for his own reputation, so, too, he judged well for the interest and permanent fame of his country. The result of that trial proved that notwithstanding the high degree of excitement then existing in consequence of the measures of the British government, a jury of Massachusetts would not deprive the most reckless enemies, even the officers of that standing army quartered among them, which they so perfectly abhorred, of any part of that protection which the law, in its mildest and most indulgent interpretation, affords to persons accused of crimes.

Without following Mr. Adams's professional course further, suffice it to say, that on the first establishment of the judicial tribunals under the authority of the State, in 1776, he received an offer of the high and responsible station of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts. But he was destined for another and a different career. From early life the bent of his mind was toward politics; a propensity which the state of the times, if it did not create, doubtless very much strengthened. Public subjects must have occupied the thoughts and filled up the conversation in the circles in which he then moved; and the interesting questions at that time just arising could not but seize on a mind like his, ardent, sanguine, and patriotic. An early prophecy. A letter, fortunately preserved, written by him at Worcester, so early as the 12th of October, 1755, is

¹ March 5, 1770, a conflict called the "Boston Massacre" took place between English troops and Bostonians, three of the latter being killed. Samuel Adams, the people's leader in Boston, in consequence compelled the Governor to withdraw the soldiers from the town.

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a proof of very comprehensive views, and uncommon depth of reflection, in a young man not yet quite twenty. In this letter he predicted the transfer of power, and the establishment of a new seat of empire in America; he predicted, also, the increase of population in the Colonies; and anticipated their naval distinction, and foretold that all Europe combined could not subdue them. All this is said, not on a public occasion or for effect, but in the style of sober and friendly correspondence, as the result of his own thoughts. "I sometimes retire," said he, at the close of the letter, "and, laying things together, form some reflections pleasing to myself. The produce of one of these reveries you have read above." This prognostication so early in his own life, so early in the history of the country, of independence, of vast increase of numbers, of naval force, of such augmented power as might defy all Europe, is remarkable. It is more remarkable that its author should live to see fulfilled to the letter what could have seemed to others, at the time, but the extravagance of youthful fancy. His earliest political feelings were thus strongly American, and from this ardent attachment to his native soil he never departed.

While still living at Quincy, and at the age of twenty-four, Mr. Adams was present, in this town, at the argument before the Supreme Court respecting Writs of Assistance,¹ and heard the celebrated and patriotic speech of James Otis. Unquestionably, that was a masterly performance. No flighty declamation about liberty, no superficial discussion of popular topics, it was a learned, penetrating, convincing, constitutional argument, expressed in a

¹ Documents giving the royal custom-house officers the right to search any house for alleged smuggled goods.

strain of high and resolute patriotism. He grasped the question then pending between England and her Colonies with the strength of a lion; and if he sometimes sported, it was only because the lion himself is sometimes playful. Its success appears to have been as great as its merits, and its impression was widely felt.

Mr. Adams himself seems never to have lost the feeling it produced, and to have entertained constantly the fullest conviction of its important effects. "I do say," he observes, "in the most solemn manner, that Mr. Otis's Oration against Writs of Assistance breathed into this nation the breath of life."



James Otis.

In 1765 Mr. Adams laid before the public, anonymously, a series of essays, afterwards collected in a volume in London, under the title of "A Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law." The object of this work was to show that our New England ancestors, in consenting to exile themselves from their native land, were actuated mainly by the desire of delivering themselves from the power of the hierarchy, and from the monarchical and aristocratical systems of the other continent; and to make this truth bear with effect on the politics of the times. Its tone is uncommonly bold and animated for that period. He calls on the people, not only to defend, but to study and understand, their rights and privi-

leges; urges earnestly the necessity of diffusing general knowledge; invokes the clergy and the bar, the colleges and academies, and all others who have the ability and the means to expose the insidious designs of arbitrary power, to resist its approaches, and to be persuaded that there is a settled design on foot to enslave all America. "Be it remembered," says the author, "that liberty must, at all hazards, be supported. We have a right to it, derived from our Maker. But if we had not, our fathers have earned and bought it for us, at the expense of their ease, their estates, their pleasure, and their blood. And liberty cannot be preserved without a general knowledge among the people, who have a right, from the frame of their nature, to knowledge, as their great Creator, who does nothing in vain, has given them understandings and a desire to know. But, besides this, they have a right, an indisputable, unalienable, indefeasible, divine right, to that most dreaded and envied kind of knowledge, I mean of the characters and conduct of their rulers. Rulers are no more than attorneys, agents, and trustees for the people; and if the cause, the interest and trust, is insidiously betrayed, or wantonly trifled away, the people have a right to revoke the authority that they themselves have deputed, and to constitute abler and better agents, attorneys, and trustees."

The citizens of this town conferred on Mr. Adams his first political distinction, and clothed him with his first political trust, by electing him one of their representatives, in 1770. Before this time he had become extensively known throughout the Province, as well by the part he had acted in relation to public affairs, as by the exercise of his professional ability. He was among those who took the deepest

Adams's first
public office.

interest in the controversy with England, and, whether in or out of the legislature, his time and talents were alike devoted to the cause. In the years 1773 and 1774 he was chosen a Councillor by the members of the General Court, but rejected by Governor Hutchinson in the former of those years, and by Governor Gage in the latter.

The time was now at hand, however, when the affairs of the Colonies urgently demanded united counsels throughout the country. An open rupture with the parent state appeared inevitable, and it was but the dictate of prudence that those

Election to
the Congress
of Delegates.

who were united by a common interest and a common danger should protect that interest and guard against that danger by united efforts. A general Congress of Delegates from all the Colonies having been proposed and agreed to, the House of Representatives, on the 17th of June, 1774, elected James Bowdoin, Thomas Cushing, Samuel Adams, John Adams, and Robert Treat Paine delegates from Massachusetts. This appointment was made at Salem, where the General Court had been convened by Governor Gage, in the last hour of the existence of a House of Representatives under the Provincial Charter. While engaged in this important business, the Governor, having been informed of what was passing, sent his secretary with a message dissolving the General Court. The secretary, finding the door locked, directed the messenger to go in and inform the Speaker that the secretary was at the door with a message from the Governor. The messenger returned, and informed the secretary that the orders of the House were that the doors should be kept fast; whereupon the secretary soon after read upon the stairs a proclamation dissolving the General Court. Thus terminated, for-



Independence Hall, Philadelphia.

ever, the actual exercise of the political power of England in or over Massachusetts. The four last-named delegates accepted their appointments, and took their

seats in Congress the first day of its meeting, the 5th of September, 1774, in Philadelphia.

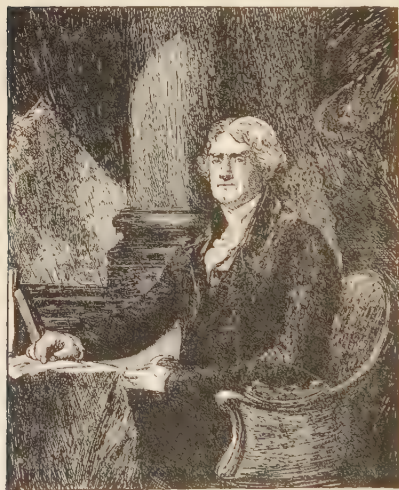
The proceedings of the first Congress are well known, and have been universally admired. It is in vain that we would look for superior proofs of wisdom, talent, and patriotism. Lord Chatham said The First Continental Congress. that, for himself, he must declare that he had

studied and admired the free states of antiquity, the master states of the world, but that for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, no body of men could stand in preference to this Congress. It is hardly inferior praise to say that no production of that great man himself can be pronounced superior to several of the papers published as the proceedings of this most able, most firm, most patriotic assembly. There is, indeed, nothing superior to them in the range of political disquisition. They not only embrace, illustrate, and enforce everything which political philosophy, the love of liberty, and the spirit of free inquiry had antecedently produced, but they add new and striking views of their own, and apply the whole, with irresistible force, in support of the cause which had drawn them together.

Mr. Adams was a constant attendant on the deliberations of this body, and bore an active part in its important measures. He was of the committee to state the rights of the Colonies, and of that also which reported the Address to the King.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, descended from ancestors who had been settled in Virginia for some generations, was born near the spot on which he died, in the county of Albemarle, on the 2d of April (Old Style), 1743. His youthful studies were pursued in the neighborhood of

his father's residence until he was removed to the College of William and Mary, the highest honors of which he in due time received. Having left the college with reputation, he applied himself to the study of the law under the tuition of George Wythe, one of the highest judicial names of which that State can boast. At an early age he was elected



Thomas Jefferson.

a member of the legislature, in which he had no sooner appeared than he distinguished himself by knowledge, capacity, and promptitude.

Mr. Jefferson appears to have been imbued with an early love of letters and science, and to have cherished a strong disposition to pursue these objects. To the physical sciences, especially, and to ancient classic literature, he is understood to

have had a warm attachment, and never entirely to have lost sight of them in the midst of the busiest occupations. But the times were times for action rather than for contemplation. The country was to be defended and to be saved, before it could be enjoyed. Philosophic leisure and literary pursuits, and even the objects of professional attention, were all necessarily postponed to the urgent calls of the public service. The exigency

of the country made the same demand on Mr. Jefferson that it made on others who had the ability and the disposition to serve it; and he obeyed the call.

Entering with all his heart into the cause of liberty, his ability, patriotism, and power with the pen naturally drew upon him a large participation in the most important concerns. Wherever he was, there was found a soul devoted to the cause, power to defend and maintain it, and willingness to incur all its hazards. In 1774 he published a "Summary View of the Rights of British America," a valuable production among those intended to show the dangers which threatened the liberties of the country, and to encourage the people in their defence. In June, 1775, he was elected a member of the Continental Congress, as successor to Peyton Randolph, who had resigned his place on account of ill health, and took his seat in that body on the 21st of the same month.

And now, fellow-citizens, without pursuing the biography of these illustrious men further, for the present, let us turn our attention to the most prominent act of their lives, their participation in the Declaration of Independence.

The Declaration of Independence.

Preparatory to the introduction of that important measure, a committee, at the head of which was Mr. Adams, had reported a resolution, which Congress adopted on the 10th of May, recommending, in substance, to all the Colonies which had not already established governments suited to the exigencies of their affairs, *to adopt such government as would, in the opinion of the representatives of the people, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents in particular, and America in general.*

This significant vote was soon followed by the direct proposition which Richard Henry Lee had the honor to

submit to Congress, by resolution, on the seventh day of June. The published journal does not expressly state it, but there is no doubt, I suppose, that this resolution was in the same words, when originally submitted by Mr. Lee, as when finally passed. Having been discussed on Saturday, the 8th, and Monday, the 10th of June, this resolution was on the last-mentioned day postponed for further consideration to the first day of July; and at the same time it was voted, that a committee be appointed to prepare a Declaration to the effect of the resolution. This committee was elected by ballot, on the following day, and consisted of Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston.

It is usual, when committees are elected by ballot, that their members should be arranged in order, according to the number of votes which each has received. Mr. Jefferson, therefore, had received the highest, and Mr. Adams the next highest number of votes. The difference is said to have been but of a single vote. Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Adams, standing thus at the head of the committee, were requested by the other members to act as a subcommittee to prepare the draft; and Mr. Jefferson drew up the paper. The original draft, as brought by him from his study, and submitted to the other members of the committee, with interlineations in the handwriting of Dr. Franklin, and others in that of Mr. Adams, was in Mr. Jefferson's possession at the time of his death. The merit of this paper is Mr. Jefferson's. Some changes were made in it at the suggestion of other members of the committee, and others by Congress while it was under discussion. But none of them altered the tone, the frame, the arrangement, or the general character of the instrument.



As a composition, the Declaration is Mr. Jefferson's. It is the production of his mind, and the high honor of it belongs to him, clearly and absolutely.

It has sometimes been said, as if it were a derogation from the merits of this paper, that it contains nothing new; that it only states grounds of proceeding, and presses topics of argument, which had often been stated and pressed before. But it was not the object of the Declaration to produce anything new. It was not to invent reasons for independence, but to state those which governed the Congress. For great and sufficient causes, it was proposed to declare independence; and the proper business of the paper to be drawn was to set forth those causes, and justify the authors of the measure, in any event of fortune, to the country and to posterity. The cause of American independence, moreover, was now to be presented to the world in such manner, if it might so be, as to engage its sympathy, to command its respect, to attract its admiration; and in an assembly of most able and distinguished men, Thomas Jefferson had the high honor of being the selected advocate of this cause. To say that he performed his great work well, would be doing him injustice. To say that he did excellently well, admirably well, would be inadequate and halting praise. Let us rather say, that he so discharged the duty assigned him, that all Americans may well rejoice that the work of drawing the title-deed of their liberties devolved upon him.

The Declaration having been reported to Congress by the committee, the resolution itself was taken up and debated on the first day of July, and again on the 2d, on which last day it was agreed to and adopted, in these words:—

The debate
on the
Declaration.

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“Resolved, That these united Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.”

Having thus passed the main resolution, Congress proceeded to consider the reported draft of the Declaration. It was discussed on the second and third and fourth days of the month in committee of the whole; and on the last of those days, being reported from that committee, it received the final approbation and sanction of Congress. It was ordered, at the same time, that copies be sent to the several States, and that it be proclaimed at the head of the army. The Declaration thus published did not bear the names of the members, for as yet it had not been signed by them. It was authenticated, like other papers of the Congress, by the signatures of the President and Secretary. On the 19th of July, as appears by the secret journal, Congress *“Resolved, That the Declaration, passed on the fourth, be fairly engrossed on parchment, with the title and style of ‘The unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America;’ and that the same, when engrossed, be signed by every member of Congress.”* And on the second day of August following, “the Declaration, being engrossed and compared at the table, was signed by the members.” So that it happens, fellow-citizens, that we pay these honors to their memory on the anniversary of that day (2d of August) on which these great men actually signed their names to the Declaration. The Declaration was thus made, that is, it passed and was adopted as an act of Congress, on the 4th of July; it was then signed, and certified by the President and

Secretary like other acts. The Fourth of July, therefore, is the anniversary of the Declaration. But the signatures of the members present were made July 4, 1776. to it, being then engrossed on parchment, on the second day of August. Absent members afterwards signed, as they came in; and indeed it bears the names of some who were not chosen members of Congress until after the 4th of July. The interest belonging to the subject will be sufficient, I hope, to justify these details.

The Congress of the Revolution, fellow-citizens, sat with closed doors, and no report of its debates was ever made. The discussion, therefore, which accompanied this great measure, has never been preserved, except in memory and by tradition. But it is, I believe, doing no injustice to others to say, that the general opinion was, and uniformly has been, that in debate, on the side of independence, John Adams had no equal. The great author of the Declaration himself has expressed that opinion uniformly and strongly. "John Adams," said he, in the hearing of him who has now the honor to address you, "John Adams was our colossus on the floor. Not graceful, not elegant, not always fluent, in his public addresses, he yet came out with a power, both of thought and of expression, which moved us from our seats."

For the part which he was here to perform, Mr. Adams doubtless was eminently fitted. He possessed a bold spirit, which disregarded danger, and a sanguine reliance on the goodness of the cause, and the virtues of the people, which led him to overlook all obstacles. His character, too, had been formed in troubled times. He had been rocked in the early storms of the controversy, and had acquired a decision and a hardihood propor-

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tioned to the severity of the discipline which he had undergone.

He not only loved the American cause devoutly, but had studied and understood it. It was all familiar to him. He had tried his powers on the questions which it involved, often and in various ways; and had brought to their consideration whatever of argument or illustration the history of his own country, the history of England, or the stores of ancient or of legal learning could furnish. Every grievance enumerated in the long catalogue of the Declaration had been the subject of his discussion, and the object of his remonstrance and reprobation. From 1760 the Colonies, the rights of the Colonies, the liberties of the Colonies, and the wrongs inflicted on the Colonies, had engaged his constant attention; and it has surprised those who have had the opportunity of witnessing it, with what full remembrance and with what prompt recollection he could refer, in his extreme old age, to every act of Parliament affecting the Colonies, distinguishing and stating their respective titles, sections, and provisions; and to all the colonial memorials, remonstrances, and petitions, with whatever else belonged to the intimate and exact history of the times from that year to 1775. It was, in his own judgment, between these years that the American people came to a full understanding and thorough knowledge of their rights, and to a fixed resolution of maintaining them; and bearing himself an active part in all important transactions, — the controversy with England being then in effect the business of his life, — facts, dates, and particulars made an impression which was never effaced. He was prepared, therefore, by education and discipline, as well as by natural talent and natural temperament, for the part which he was now to act.

The eloquence of Mr. Adams resembled his general character, and formed, indeed, a part of it. It was bold, manly, and energetic; and such the crisis required. When public bodies are to be addressed on momentous occasions, when great interests are at stake, and strong passions excited, nothing is valuable in speech farther than as it is connected with high intellectual and moral endowments. Clearness, force, and earnestness are the qualities which produce conviction. True eloquence, indeed, does not consist in speech. It cannot be brought from far. Labor and learning may toil for it, but they will toil in vain. Words and phrases may be marshalled in every way, but they cannot compass it. It must exist in the man, in the subject, and in the occasion. Affected passion, intense expression, the pomp of declamation, all may aspire to it; they cannot reach it. It comes, if it come at all, like the outbreking of a fountain from the earth, or the bursting forth of volcanic fires, with spontaneous, original, native force. The graces taught in the schools, the costly ornaments and studied contrivances of speech, shock and disgust men, when their own lives, and the fate of their wives, their children, and their country, hang on the decision of the hour. Then words have lost their power, rhetoric is vain, and all elaborate oratory contemptible. Even genius itself then feels rebuked and subdued, as in the presence of higher qualities. Then patriotism is eloquent; then self-devotion is eloquent. The clear conception, out-running the deductions of logic, the high purpose, the firm resolve, the dauntless spirit, speaking on the tongue, beaming from the eye, informing every feature, and urging the whole man onward, right onward to his object, — this, this is eloquence; or rather, it is some-

The nature
of true
eloquence.

thing greater and higher than all eloquence, — it is action, noble, sublime, godlike action.

In July, 1776, the controversy had passed the stage of argument. An appeal had been made to force, and opposing armies were in the field. Congress, then, was to decide whether the tie which had so long bound us to the parent state was to be severed at once, and severed forever. All the Colonies had signified their resolution to abide by this decision, and the people looked for it with the most intense anxiety. And surely, fellow-citizens, never, never were men called to a more important political deliberation. If we contemplate it from the point where they then stood, no question could be more full of interest; if we look at it now, and judge of its importance by its effects, it appears of still greater magnitude.

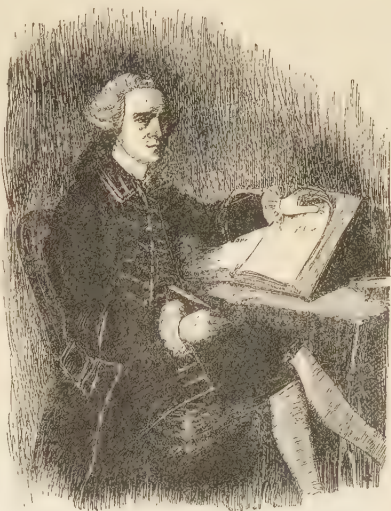
Let us, then, bring before us the assembly which was about to decide a question thus big with the fate of empire. Let us open their doors and look in upon their deliberations. Let us survey the anxious and careworn countenances, let us hear the firm-toned voices, of this band of patriots.

Hancock presides over the solemn sitting; and one of those not yet prepared to pronounce for absolute independence is on the floor, and is urging his reasons for dissenting from the Declaration.

“Let us pause! This step, once taken, cannot be retraced. This resolution, once passed, will cut off all hope of reconciliation. If success attend the arms of England, we shall then be no longer Colonies with charters and with privileges; these will all be forfeited by this act; and we shall be in the condition of other conquered people, at the mercy of the conquerors. For ourselves, we may be

An imaginary speech in opposition to the Declaration.

ready to run the hazard; but are we ready to carry the country to that length? Is success so probable as to justify it? Where is the military, where the naval power, by which we are to resist the whole strength of the arm of England, — for she will exert that strength to the utmost? Can we rely on the constancy and perseverance of the people? or will they not act as the people of other countries have acted, and, wearied with a long war, submit, in the end, to a worse oppression? While we stand on our old ground, and insist on redress of grievances, we know we are right, and are not answerable for consequences. Nothing, then, can be imputed to us. But if we now change our object, carry our pre-



John Hancock.

tensions farther, and set up for absolute independence, we shall lose the sympathy of mankind. We shall no longer be defending what we possess, but struggling for something which we never did possess, and which we have solemnly and uniformly disclaimed all intention of pursuing, from the very outset of the troubles. Abandoning thus our old ground of resistance only to arbitrary acts of oppression, the nations will believe the whole to have been mere pretence, and they will look

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on us, not as injured, but as ambitious subjects. I shudder before this responsibility. It will be on us, if, relinquishing the ground on which we have stood so long, and stood so safely, we now proclaim independence, and carry on the war for that object, while these cities burn, these pleasant fields whiten and bleach with the bones of their owners, and these streams run blood. It will be upon us, it will be upon us, if, failing to maintain this unseasonable and ill-judged declaration, a sinner's despotism, maintained by military power, shall be established over our posterity, when we ourselves, given up by an exhausted, a harassed, a misled people, shall have expiated our rashness and atoned for our presumption on the scaffold."

It was not Mr. Adams to reply to arguments like these. We know his opinions, and we know his character. He would commence with his accustomed directness and earnestness.

"Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish. I give my hand and my heart to this vote. It is true, indeed, Supposed speech of John Adams to the Convention on the Declaration of Independence. that in the beginning we aimed not at independence. But there's a divinity which shapes our ends. The injustice of England has driven us to arms; and, blinded to her own interest for our good, she has obstinately persisted. Our independence is now within our grasp. We have but to reach forth to it, and it is ours. Why, then, should we defer the Declaration? Is any man so weak as now to hope for a reconciliation with England which shall leave either safety to the country and its liberties, or safety to his own life and his own honor? Are not you, Sir, who sit in that chair, — is not he, our venerable colleague near you, — are you not both already the proscribed and proscribed objects of punishment

and of vengeance? Cut off from all hope of royal clemency, what are you, what can you be, while the power of England remains, but outlaws? If we postpone independence, do we mean to carry on, or to give up, the war? Do we mean to submit to the measures of Parliament, Boston Port Bill¹ and all? Do we mean to submit, and consent that we ourselves shall be ground to powder, and our country and its rights trodden down in the dust? I know we do not mean to submit. We never shall submit. Do we intend to violate that most solemn obligation ever entered into by men, that plighting, before God, of our sacred honor to Washington, when, putting him forth to incur the dangers of war, as well as the political hazards of the times, we promised to adhere to him, in every extremity, with our fortunes and our lives? I know there is not a man here who would not rather see a general conflagration sweep over the land, or an earthquake sink it, than one jot or tittle of that plighted faith fall to the ground. For myself, having, twelve months ago, in this place, moved you that George Washington be appointed commander of the forces raised, or to be raised, for defence of American liberty, may my right hand forget her cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I hesitate or waver in the support I give him.

“The war, then, must go on. We must fight it through. And if the war must go on, why put off longer the Declaration of Independence? That measure will strengthen us. It will give us character abroad. The nations will then treat with us, which they never

¹ Parliament closed the port of Boston, in 1774, in retaliation for the destruction of taxed tea by the Colonists in 1773, in the so-called “Boston Tea-party.” Under the Port Bill all exports and imports were prohibited save food and fuel.

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can do while we acknowledge ourselves subjects, in arms against our sovereign. Nay, I maintain that England herself will sooner treat for peace with us on the footing of independence, than consent, by repealing her acts, to acknowledge that her whole conduct towards us has been a course of injustice and oppression. Her pride will be less wounded by submitting to that course of things which now predestinates our independence, than by yielding the points in controversy to her rebellious subjects. The former she would regard as the result of fortune; the latter she would feel as her own deep disgrace. Why then, why then, Sir, do we not as soon as possible change this from a civil to a national war? And since we must fight it through, why not put ourselves in a state to enjoy all the benefits of victory, if we gain the victory?

“If we fail, it can be no worse for us. But we shall not fail. The cause will raise up armies; the cause will create navies. The people, the people, if we are true to them, will carry us, and will carry themselves, gloriously through this struggle. I care not how fickle other people have been found. I know the people of these Colonies, and I know that resistance to British aggression is deep and settled in their hearts and cannot be eradicated. Every Colony, indeed, has expressed its willingness to follow, if we but take the lead. Sir, the Declaration will inspire the people with increased courage. Instead of a long and bloody war for the restoration of privileges, for redress of grievances, for chartered immunities, held under a British king, set before them the glorious object of entire independence and it will breathe into them anew the breath of life. Read this Declaration at the head of the army; every sword will be drawn from its scabbard, and the solemn

vow uttered, to maintain it, or to perish on the bed of honor. Publish it from the pulpit; religion will approve it, and the love of religious liberty will cling round it, resolved to stand with it or fall with it. Send it to the public halls; proclaim it there; let them hear it who heard the first roar of the enemy's cannon; let them see it who saw their brothers and their sons fall on the field of Bunker Hill, and in the streets of Lexington and Concord, and the very walls will cry out in its support.

"Sir, I know the uncertainty of human affairs, but I see, I see clearly, through this day's business. You and I, indeed, may rue it. We may not live to the time when this Declaration shall be made good. We may die; die colonists; die slaves; die, it may be, ignominiously and on the scaffold. Be it so. Be it so. If it be the pleasure of Heaven that my country shall require the poor offering of my life, the victim shall be ready, at the appointed hour of sacrifice, come when that hour may. But while I do live, let me have a country, or at least the hope of a country, and that a free country.

"But whatever may be our fate, be assured, be assured that this Declaration will stand. It may cost treasure, and it may cost blood; but it will stand, and it will richly compensate for both. Through the thick gloom of the present, I see the brightness of the future, as the sun in heaven. We shall make this a glorious, an immortal day. When we are in our graves, our children will honor it. They will celebrate it with thanksgiving, with festivity, with bonfires, and illuminations. On its annual return they will shed tears, copious, gushing tears, not of subjection and slavery, not of agony and distress, but of exultation, of gratitude, and of joy. Sir, before God, I believe the hour is come. My judg-

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ment approves this measure, and my whole heart is in it. All that I have, and all that I am, and all that I hope, in this life, I am now ready here to stake upon it; and I leave off as I begun, that live or die, survive or perish, I am for the Declaration. It is my living sentiment, and by the blessing of God it shall be my dying sentiment, Independence *now*, and Independence forever."

And so that day shall be honored, illustrious prophet and patriot! so that day shall be honored, and as often as it returns, thy renown shall come along with it, and the glory of thy life, like the day of thy death, shall not fail from the remembrance of men.

It would be unjust, fellow-citizens, on this occasion, while we express our veneration for him who is the immediate subject of these remarks, were we to omit a most respectful, affectionate, and grateful mention of those other great men, his colleagues, who stood with him, and with the same spirit, the same devotion, took part in the interesting transaction. Hancock, the proscribed Hancock, exiled from his home by a military governor, cut off by proclamation from the mercy of the crown, — Heaven reserved for him the distinguished honor of putting this great question to the vote, and of writing his own name first, and most conspicuously, on that parchment which spoke defiance to the power of the crown of England. There, too, is the name of that other proscribed patriot, Samuel Adams, a man who hungered and thirsted for the independence of his country, who thought the Declaration halted and lingered, being himself not only ready, but eager for it, long before it was proposed; a man of the deepest sagacity, the clearest

**Tributes to
John Hancock, Samuel
Adams, and
Robert Treat
Paine.**

foresight, and the profoundest judgment in men. And there is Gerry, himself among the earliest and the foremost of the patriots, found when the battle of Lexington summoned them to common counsels, by the side of Warren; a man who lived to serve his country at home and abroad, and to die in the second place in the government. There, too, is the inflexible, the upright, the Spartan character, Robert Treat Paine. He also lived to serve his country through the struggle, and then withdrew from her councils, only that he might give his labors and his life to his native State, in another relation. These names, fellow-citizens, are the treasures of the Commonwealth; and they are treasures which grow brighter by time.



Samuel Adams.

It is now necessary to resume the narrative, and to finish with great brevity the notice of the lives of those whose virtues and services we have met to commemorate.

Mr. Adams remained in Congress from its first meeting till November, 1777, when he was appointed Minister to France. He proceeded on that service in the February following, embarking in the frigate "Boston," from the shore of his native town, at the foot of Mount

Wollaston. The year following, he was appointed commissioner to treat of peace with England. Returning to

Adams the United States, he was a delegate from
appointed Braintree in the Convention for framing the
Minister to Constitution of this Commonwealth, in 1780.
France.

At the latter end of the same year, he again went abroad in the diplomatic service of the country, and was employed at various courts, and occupied with various negotiations, until 1788. The particulars of these interesting and important services this occasion does not allow time to relate. In 1782 he concluded our first treaty with Holland. His negotiations with that republic, his efforts to persuade the States-General¹ to recognize our independence, his incessant and indefatigable exertions to represent the American cause favorably on the Continent, and to counteract the designs of its enemies, open and secret, and his successful undertaking to obtain loans on the credit of a nation yet new and unknown, are among his most arduous, most useful, most honorable services. It was his fortune to bear a part in the negotiation for peace with England, and in something more than six years from the Declaration which he had so strenuously supported, he had the satisfaction of seeing the minister plenipotentiary of the crown subscribe his name to the instrument which declared that his "Britannic Majesty acknowledged the United States to be free, sovereign, and independent." In these important transactions, Mr. Adams's conduct received the marked approbation of Congress and of the country.

Returning to the United States in 1788, he found the new government about going into operation, and was himself elected the first Vice-President,² a situation

¹ The parliament of Holland.

² Prior to 1804 the "presidential electors" voted for two candidates

which he filled with reputation for eight years, at the expiration of which he was raised to the Presidential chair, as immediate successor to the immortal Washington. In this high station he was succeeded by Mr. Jefferson, after a memorable controversy between their respective friends, in 1801; and from that period his manner of life has been known to all who hear me. He has lived, for five-and-twenty years, with every enjoyment that could render old age happy. Not inattentive to the occurrences of the times, political cares have yet not materially, or for any long time, disturbed his repose. In 1820 he acted as Elector of President and Vice-President, and in the same year we saw him, then at the age of eighty-five, a member of the Convention of this Commonwealth called to revise the Constitution. Forty years before, he had been one of those who formed that Constitution; and he had now the pleasure of witnessing that there was little which the people desired to change. Possessing all his faculties to the end of his long life, with an unabated love of reading and contemplation, in the centre of interesting circles of friendship and affection, he was blessed in his retirement with whatever of repose and felicity the condition of man allows. He had, also, other enjoyments. He saw around him that prosperity and general happiness which had been the object of his public cares and labors. No man ever beheld more clearly, and for a longer time, the great and beneficial effects of the services rendered by himself to his country. That liberty which he so early defended, that independence of which he was so able an advocate and supporter, he saw, we trust, firmly and securely

Vice-President, 1789-1797; President, 1797-1801.

for president; the one receiving the highest number to be president, and the one having the next highest vice-president.

established. The population of the country thickened around him faster, and extended wider, than his own sanguine predictions had anticipated; and the wealth, respectability, and power of the nation sprang up to a magnitude which it is quite impossible he could have expected to witness in his day. He lived also to behold those principles of civil freedom which had been developed, established, and practically applied in America, attract attention, command respect, and awaken imitation, in other regions of the globe; and well might, and well did, he exclaim, "Where will the consequences of the American Revolution end?"

If anything yet remain to fill this cup of happiness, let it be added, that he lived to see a great and intelligent people bestow the highest honor in their gift where he had bestowed his own kindest parental affections and lodged his fondest hopes.¹ Thus honored in life, thus happy at death, he saw the jubilee,² and he died; and with the last prayers which trembled on his lips was the fervent supplication for his country, "Independence forever!"

Mr. Jefferson, having been occupied in the years 1778 and 1779 in the important service of revising the laws of Virginia, was elected Governor of that State, as successor to Patrick Henry, and held the situation when the State was invaded by the British arms. In 1781 he published his "Notes on Virginia," a work which attracted attention in Europe as well as America, dispelled many misconceptions

¹ John Quincy Adams was President of the United States, 1825-1829.

² The fiftieth anniversary of the independence of the United States. The Jews of the Old Testament celebrated every fiftieth anniversary of their entrance into Canaan. Leviticus xxv. 10.

respecting this continent, and gave its author a place among men distinguished for science. In November, 1783, he again took his seat in the Continental Congress, but in the May following was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary, to act abroad, in the negotiation of commercial treaties, with Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams. He proceeded to France, in execution of this mission, embarking at Boston; and that was the only occasion on which he ever visited this place. In 1785 he was appointed Minister to France, the duties of which situation he continued to perform until October, 1789,

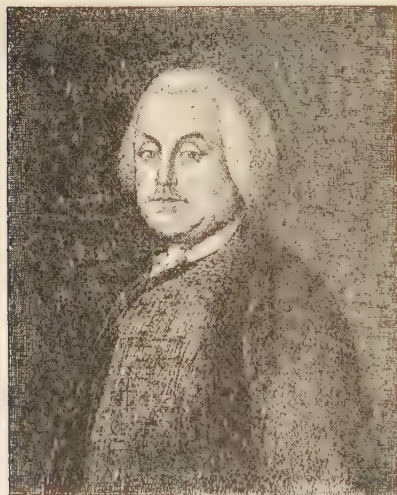


Patrick Henry.

when he obtained leave to retire, just on the eve of that tremendous revolution which has so much agitated the world in our times. Mr. Jefferson's discharge of his diplomatic duties was marked by great ability, diligence, and patriotism; and while he resided at Paris, in one of the most interesting periods, his character for intelligence, his love of knowledge and of the society of learned men, distinguished him in the highest circles of the French capital. No court in Europe had at that time in Paris a representative commanding or enjoying higher regard, for political knowledge or for general attainments, than the minister of this then infant republic. Immediately on his return to his native country, at the organization of the gov-

Minister to
France.

ernment under the present Constitution, his talents and experience recommended him to President Washington for the first office in his gift. He was placed at the head of the Department of State. In this situation, also, he manifested conspicuous ability. His correspondence with the ministers of other powers residing here, and his instructions to our own



Benjamin Franklin.

diplomatic agents abroad, are among our ablest state papers. A thorough knowledge of the laws and usages of nations, perfect acquaintance with the immediate subject before him, great felicity, and still greater facility, in writing, show themselves in whatever effort his official situation called on him to make. It is believed by competent judges, that the diplomatic intercourse

of the government of the United States, from the first meeting of the Continental Congress in 1774 to the present time, taken together, would not suffer, in respect to the talent with which it has been conducted, by comparison with anything which other and older governments can produce; and to the attainment of this respectability and distinction Mr. Jefferson has contributed his full part.

On the retirement of General Washington from the Presidency, and the election of Mr. Adams to that office in 1797, he was chosen Vice-President. While presiding in this capacity over the deliberations of the Senate, he compiled and published a Manual of Parliamentary Practice, a work of more labor and more merit than is indicated by its size. It is now received as the general standard by which proceedings are regulated, not only in both Houses of Congress, but in most of the other legislative bodies in the country. In 1801 he was elected President, in opposition to Mr. Adams, and re-elected in 1805, by a vote approaching towards unanimity.

Vice-President, 1797-1801; President, 1801-1809.

From the time of his final retirement from public life, in 1809, Mr. Jefferson lived as became a wise man. Surrounded by affectionate friends, his ardor in the pursuit of knowledge undiminished, with uncommon health and unbroken spirits, he was able to enjoy largely the rational pleasures of life, and to partake in that public prosperity which he had so much contributed to produce. His kindness and hospitality, the charm of his conversation, the ease of his manners, the extent of his acquirements, and, especially, the full store of Revolutionary incidents which he had treasured in his memory, and which he knew when and how to dispense, rendered his abode in a high degree attractive to his admiring countrymen, while his high public and scientific character drew towards him every intelligent and educated traveller from abroad. Both Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson had the pleasure of knowing that the respect which they so largely received was not paid to their official stations. They were not men made great by office; but great men, on whom the

country for its own benefit had conferred office. There was that in them which office did not give, and which the relinquishment of office did not, and could not, take away. In their retirement, in the midst of their fellow-citizens, themselves private citizens, they enjoyed as high regard and esteem as when filling the most important places of public trust.

There remained to Mr. Jefferson yet one other work of patriotism and beneficence, the establishment of a university in his native State. To this object he devoted years of incessant and anxious attention, and by the enlightened liberality of the Legislature of Virginia, and the co-operation of other able and zealous friends, he lived to see it accomplished. May all success attend this infant seminary; and may those who enjoy its advantages, as often as their eyes shall rest on the neighboring height, recollect what they owe to their disinterested and indefatigable benefactor; and may letters honor him who thus labored in the cause of letters!¹

Thus useful, and thus respected, passed the old age of Thomas Jefferson. But time was on its ever-ceaseless wing, and was now bringing the last hour of this illustrious man. He saw its approach with undisturbed serenity. He counted the moments as they passed, and beheld that his last sands were falling. That day, too, was at hand which he had helped to make immortal. One wish, one hope, if it were not presumptuous, beat

¹ Mr. Jefferson himself considered his services in establishing the University of Virginia as among the most important rendered by him to the country. In large part he arranged its curriculum, and even designed its buildings. By his direction the following inscription was placed on his monument: "Here was buried Thomas Jefferson, Author of the Declaration of Independence, of the Statutes of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and Father of the University of Virginia."

in his fainting breast. Could it be so, might it please God, he would desire once more to see the sun, once more to look abroad on the scene around him, on the great day of liberty. Heaven, in its mercy, fulfilled that prayer. He saw that sun; he enjoyed its sacred light; he thanked God for this mercy, and bowed his aged head to the grave. "*Felix, non vitæ tantum claritate, sed etiam opportunitate mortis.*"¹

The last public labor of Mr. Jefferson naturally suggests the expression of the high praise which is due, both to him and to Mr. Adams, for their uniform and zealous attachment to learning, and to the cause of general knowledge. Of the advantages of learning, indeed, and of literary accomplishments, their own characters were striking recommendations and illustrations. They were scholars, ripe and good scholars; widely acquainted with ancient as well as modern literature, and not altogether uninstructed in the deeper sciences. Their acquirements, doubtless, were different, and so were the particular objects of their literary pursuits; as their tastes and characters, in these respects, differed like those of other men. Being, also, men of busy lives, with great objects requiring action constantly before them, their attainments in letters did not become showy or obtrusive. Yet I would hazard the opinion that if we could now ascertain all the causes which gave them eminence and distinction in the midst of the great men with whom they acted, we should find not among the least their early acquisitions in literature, the resources which it furnished, the promptitude and facility which it communicated, and the wide field it opened for analogy and illustration; giving them thus, on every sub-

¹ "Happy, not only in the brightness of his life, but also in the circumstance of his death."

ject, a larger view and a broader range, as well for discussion as for the government of their own conduct.

Fellow-citizens, I will detain you no longer by this faint and feeble tribute to the memory of the illustrious dead. Even in other hands adequate justice could not be done to them, within the limits of this occasion. Their highest, their best praise is your deep conviction of their merits, your affectionate gratitude for their labors and their services. It is not my voice, it is this cessation of ordinary pursuits, this arresting of all attention, these solemn ceremonies, and this crowded house, which speak their eulogy. Their fame, indeed, is safe. That is now treasured up beyond the reach of accident. Although no sculptured marble should rise to their memory, nor engraved stone bear record of their deeds, yet will their remembrance be as lasting as the land they honored. Marble columns may, indeed, moulder into dust; time may erase all impress from the crumbling stone; but their fame remains; for with American Liberty it rose, and with American Liberty only can it perish. It was the last swelling peal of yonder choir: "Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name liveth evermore." I catch that solemn song, I echo that lofty strain of funeral triumph, "Their name liveth evermore."

Of the illustrious signers of the Declaration of Independence there now remains only Charles Carroll. He seems an aged oak, standing alone on the plain, which time has spared a little longer after all its contemporaries have been levelled with the dust. Venerable object! we delight to gather round its trunk, while yet it stands, and to dwell beneath its shadow. Sole survivor of an assembly of as great men as the world has witnessed, in

**Charles
Carroll, in
1826 the
last of the
signers of
the Declara-
tion.**

a transaction one of the most important that history records, what thoughts, what interesting reflections, must fill his elevated and devout soul! If he dwell on the past, how touching its recollections; if he survey the present, how happy, how joyous, how full of the fruition of that hope which his ardent patriotism indulged; if he glance at the future, how does the prospect of his country's advancement almost bewilder his weakened conception! Fortunate, distinguished patriot! Interesting relic of the past! Let him know that, while we honor the dead, we do not forget the living; and that there is not a heart here which does not fervently pray that Heaven may keep him yet back from the society of his companions.

And now, fellow-citizens, let us not retire from this occasion without a deep and solemn conviction of the duties which have devolved upon us. This lovely land, this glorious liberty, these benign institutions, the dear purchase of our fathers, America's debt to the fathers. are ours; ours to enjoy, ours to preserve, ours to transmit. Generations past and generations to come hold us responsible for this sacred trust. Our fathers, from behind, admonish us, with their anxious paternal voices; posterity calls out to us, from the bosom of the future; the world turns hither its solicitous eyes; all, all conjure us to act wisely, and faithfully, in the relation which we sustain. We can never, indeed, pay the debt which is upon us; but by virtue, by morality, by religion, by the cultivation of every good principle and every good habit, we may hope to enjoy the blessing, through our day, and to leave it unimpaired to our children. Let us feel deeply how much of what we are and of what we possess we owe to this liberty, and

to these institutions of government. Nature has, indeed, given us a soil which yields bounteously to the hand of industry; the mighty and fruitful ocean is before us; and the skies over our heads shed health and vigor. But what are lands, and seas, and skies to civilized man, without society, without knowledge, without morals, without religious culture; and how can these be enjoyed, in all their extent and all their excellence, but under the protection of wise institutions and a free government? Fellow-citizens, there is not one of us, there is not one of us here present, who does not, at this moment, and at every moment, experience, in his own condition, and in the condition of those most near and dear to him, the influence and the benefits of this liberty and these institutions. Let us then acknowledge the blessing, let us feel it deeply and powerfully, let us cherish a strong affection for it, and resolve to maintain and perpetuate it. The blood of our fathers, let it not have been shed in vain; the great hope of posterity, let it not be blasted.

The striking attitude, too, in which we stand to the world around us, a topic to which, I fear, I advert too often and dwell on too long, cannot be altogether omitted here. Neither individuals nor nations can perform their part well until they understand and feel its importance, and comprehend and justly appreciate all the duties belonging to it. It is not to inflate national vanity, nor to swell a light and empty feeling of self-importance, but it is that we may judge justly of our situation, and of our own duties, that I earnestly urge upon you this consideration of our position and our character among the nations of the earth. It cannot be denied, but by those who would dispute against the sun, that with America, and in America, a new era com-

mences in human affairs. This era is distinguished by free representative governments, by entire religious liberty, by improved systems of national intercourse, by a newly awakened and an unconquerable spirit of free inquiry, and by a diffusion of knowledge through the community, such as has been before altogether unknown and unheard of. America, America, our country, fellow-citizens, our own dear and native land, is inseparably connected, fast bound up, in fortune and by fate, with these great interests. If they fall, we fall with them; if they stand, it will be because we have maintained them. Let us contemplate, then, this connection, which binds the prosperity of others to our own; and let us manfully discharge all the duties which it imposes. If we cherish the virtues and the principles of our fathers, Heaven will assist us to carry on the work of human liberty and human happiness. Auspicious omens cheer us. Great examples are before us. Our own firmament now shines brightly upon our path. Washington is in the clear, upper sky. These other stars have now joined the American constellation; they circle round their centre, and the heavens beam with new light. Beneath this illumination let us walk the course of life, and at its close devoutly commend our beloved country, the common parent of us all, to the Divine Benignity.¹

¹ The question has often been asked whether the anonymous speech against the Declaration of Independence, and the speech in support of it ascribed to John Adams in the preceding address, are a portion of the debates which actually took place in 1776 in the Continental Congress. Those speeches were composed by Mr. Webster, after the manner of the ancient historians, as embodying the arguments relied upon by the friends and opponents of the measure, respectively. They represent speeches actually made on both sides, but no report of the debates of this period has been preserved, and Mr. Webster had no aid

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in framing these addresses but what was furnished by tradition and the known line of argument pursued by the speakers and writers of that day for and against the measure of Independence. The first sentence of the speech ascribed to Mr. Adams was suggested by the parting scene with Jonathan Sewall, as described by Mr. Adams himself, in the Preface to the "*Letters of Novanglus and Massachusettensis*."

The following answer was written by Mr. Webster to one of the letters of inquiry above alluded to.

"WASHINGTON, 22 *January*, 1846.

"DEAR SIR:—

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant. Its contents hardly surprise me, as I have received very many similar communications.

"Your inquiry is easily answered. The Congress of the Revolution sat with closed doors. Its proceedings were made known to the public from time to time, by printing its journal; but the debates were not published. So far as I know, there is not existing, in print or manuscript, the speech, or any part or fragment of the speech, delivered by Mr. Adams on the question of the Declaration of Independence. We only know, from the testimony of his auditors, that he spoke with remarkable ability and characteristic earnestness.

"The day after the Declaration was made, Mr. Adams, in writing to a friend, declared the event to be one that 'ought to be commemorated, as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward, forevermore.'

"And on the day of his death, hearing the noise of bells and cannon, he asked the occasion. On being reminded that it was 'Independent day,' he replied, 'Independence forever!' These expressions were introduced into the speech *supposed* to have been made by him. For the rest I must be answerable. The speech was written by me, in my house in Boston, the day before the delivery of the Discourse in Faneuil Hall; a poor substitute, I am sure it would appear to be, if we could now see the speech actually made by Mr. Adams on that transcendently important occasion.

"I am, respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"DANIEL WEBSTER."

APPENDIX A

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

In Congress, July 4, 1776

THE UNANIMOUS DECLARATION OF THE THIRTEEN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

WHEN in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by

abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. — Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their Public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

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He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States ; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners ; refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislature.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws ; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation :

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us :

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States :

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world :

For imposing taxes on us without our Consent :

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury :

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences :

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies :

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For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments :

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with Power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms : Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free People.

Nor have We been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common

kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

JOHN HANCOCK.

[*New Hampshire*] JOSIAH BARTLETT, WM. WHIPPLE,
MATTHEW THORNTON.

[*Massachusetts Bay*] SAML. ADAMS, JOHN ADAMS,
ROBT. TREAT PAINE, ELBRIDGE GERRY.

[*Rhode Island*] STEP. HOPKINS, WILLIAM ELLERY.

[*Connecticut*] ROGER SHERMAN, SAM'EL HUNTINGTON,
WM. WILLIAMS, OLIVER WOLCOTT.

[*New York*] WM. FLOYD, PHIL. LIVINGSTON, FRANS.
LEWIS, LEWIS MORRIS.

[*New Jersey*] RICHD. STOCKTON, JNO. WITHERSPOON,
FRAS. HOPKINSON, JOHN HART, ABRA. CLARK.

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[*Pennsylvania*] ROBT. MORRIS. BENJAMIN RUSH. BENJA. FRANKLIN. JOHN MORTON. GEO. CLYMER. JAS. SMITH, GEO. TAYLOR, JAMES WILSON. GEO. ROSS.

[*Delaware*] CESAR RODNEY. GEO. READ. THO. M'KEAN.

[*Maryland*] SAMUEL CHASE, WM. PACA. THOS. STONE, CHARLES CARROLL of Carrollton.

[*Virginia*] GEORGE WYTHE. RICHARD HENRY LEE, TH. JEFFERSON. BENJA. HARRISON. THOS. NELSON, jr., FRANCIS LIGHTFOOT LEE, CARTER BRAXTON.

[*North Carolina*] WM. HOOPER. JOSEPH HEWES, JOHN PENN.

[*South Carolina*] EDWARD RUTLEDGE. THOS. HEYWARD, JUNR., THOMAS LYNCH, JUNR., ARTHUR MIDDLETON.

[*Georgia*] BUTTON GWINNETT, LYMAN HALL, GEO. WALTON.

THE MURDER OF CAPTAIN JOSEPH WHITE¹

FROM AN ARGUMENT ON THE TRIAL OF JOHN FRANCIS
KNAPP, AT SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS, AUG. 3, 1830

GENTLEMEN, it is a most extraordinary case. In some respects, it has hardly a precedent anywhere; certainly none in our New England history. This bloody drama exhibited no suddenly excited, ungovernable rage. The actors in it were not surprised by any lion-like temptation springing upon their virtue, and overcoming it, before resistance could begin. Nor did they do the deed to glut savage vengeance, or satiate long-

¹ Joseph White, an old man of eighty, was found murdered in his bed, in Salem, Massachusetts, on the morning of April 7, 1830. A few weeks later four men — Richard Crowninshield, George Crowninshield, John Francis Knapp, and Joseph J. Knapp, Jr. — were arrested on the charge of murder. On June 15 Richard Crowninshield committed suicide in his cell; George Crowninshield, having proved an alibi, was discharged; and the two Knapps were tried between July 20 and August 20, the former as principal and the latter as accessory. Joseph made a full confession, outside of court, on the government's promise of impunity; but afterwards refused to repeat this testimony on the witness-stand. It was shown that the fatal blow was struck by Richard Crowninshield; that John Francis Knapp, who had bargained with Richard Crowninshield to commit the murder, was lurking in the neighborhood during the commission of the crime; and that Joseph J. Knapp was also an accessory before the fact, having, indeed, projected the murder. The Knapps were executed. A detailed description of the extraordinary network of circumstances, before and after the murder, is given in the volume entitled "Great Speeches and Orations of Daniel Webster."

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settled and deadly hate. It was a cool, calculating, money-making murder. It was all "hire and salary, not revenge." It was the weighing of money against life; the counting out of so many pieces of silver against so many ounces of blood.

An aged man, without an enemy in the world, in his own house, and in his own bed, is made the victim of a butcherly murder, for mere pay. Truly, here is a new lesson for painters and poets. Whoever shall hereafter draw the portrait of murder, if he will show it as it has been exhibited, where such example was last to have been looked for, in the very bosom of our New England society, let him not give it the grim visage of Moloch, the brow knitted by revenge, the face black with settled hate, and the bloodshot eye emitting livid fires of malice. Let him draw, rather, a decorous, smooth-faced, bloodless demon; a picture in repose, rather than in action; not so much an example of human nature in its depravity, and in its paroxysms of crime, as an infernal being, a fiend, in the ordinary display and development of his character.

The deed was executed with a degree of self-possession and steadiness equal to the wickedness with which it was planned. The circumstances now clearly in evidence spread out the whole scene before us. Deep sleep had fallen on the destined victim, and on all beneath his roof. A healthful old man, to whom sleep was sweet, the first sound slumbers of the night held him in their soft but strong embrace. The assassin enters, through the window already prepared, into an unoccupied apartment. With noiseless foot he paces the lonely hall, half lighted by the moon; he winds up the ascent of the stairs, and reaches the door of the chamber. Of this, he moves the lock, by soft and

continued pressure, till it turns on its hinges without noise; and he enters, and beholds his victim before him. The room is uncommonly open to the admission of light. The face of the innocent sleeper is turned from the murderer, and the beams of the moon, resting on the gray locks of his aged temple, show him where to strike. The fatal blow is given! and the victim passes, without a struggle or a motion, from the repose of sleep to the repose of death! It is the assassin's purpose to make sure work; and he plies the dagger, though it is obvious that life has been destroyed by the blow of the bludgeon. He even raises the aged arm, that he may not fail in his aim at the heart, and replaces it again over the wounds of the poniard! To finish the picture, he explores the wrist for the pulse! He feels for it, and ascertains that it beats no longer! It is accomplished. The deed is done. He retreats, retraces his steps to the window, passes out through it as he came in, and escapes. He has done the murder. No eye has seen him, no ear has heard him. The secret is his own, and it is safe!

Ah! gentlemen, that was a dreadful mistake. Such a secret can be safe nowhere. The whole creation of God has neither nook nor corner where the "Murder guilty can bestow it, and say it is safe. Not will out." to speak of that eye which pierces through all disguises, and beholds everything as in the splendor of noon, such secrets of guilt are never safe from detection, even by men. True it is, generally speaking, that "murder will out." True it is, that Providence hath so ordained, and doth so govern things, that those who break the great law of Heaven by shedding man's blood seldom succeed in avoiding discovery. Especially, in a case exciting so much attention as this, discovery must

come, and will come, sooner or later. A thousand eyes turn at once to explore every man, every thing, every circumstance, connected with the time and place; a thousand ears catch every whisper; a thousand excited minds intensely dwell on the scene, shedding all their light, and ready to kindle the slightest circumstance into a blaze of discovery. Meantime the guilty soul cannot keep its own secret. It is false to itself; on rather, it feels an irresistible impulse of conscience to be true to itself. It labors under its guilty possession, and knows not what to do with it. The human heart was not made for the residence of such an inhabitant. It finds itself preyed on by a torment, which it dares not acknowledge to God or man. A vulture is devouring it, and it can ask no sympathy or assistance, either from heaven or earth. The secret which the murderer possesses soon comes to possess him; and, like the evil spirits of which we read, it overcomes him, and leads him whithersoever it will. He feels it beating at his heart, rising to his throat, and demanding disclosure. He thinks the whole world sees it in his face, reads it in his eyes, and almost hears its workings in the very silence of his thoughts. It has become his master. It betrays his discretion, it breaks down his courage, it conquers his prudence. When suspicious from without begin to embarrass him, and the net of circumstance to entangle him, the fatal secret struggles with still greater violence to burst forth. It must be confessed, it will be confessed; there is no refuge from confession but suicide, and suicide is confession.

THE REPLY TO HAYNE

FROM THE SECOND SPEECH ON FOOT'S RESOLUTION,
DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
JAN. 26 AND 27, 1830¹

MR. PRESIDENT, — When the mariner has been tossed for many days in thick weather, and on an unknown sea, he naturally avails himself of the first pause in the storm, the earliest glance of the sun, to take his latitude, and ascertain how far the elements have

¹ The "Great Debate" in the Senate, between Webster and Hayne, had an unexpected origin. A resolution had been introduced by Senator Samuel Augustus Foot, of Connecticut, merely ordering an inquiry into the expediency of throwing restrictions around future sales of public lands of the United States. Into the discussion of this resolution, which lasted five months, was brought a large number of partisan pleas, tariff arguments, local jealousies, and questions of the right and wrong of slavery, and of the respective powers of the State and national governments. Recriminations and even personalities were not infrequent; and some of the Southern speakers did not refrain, in defence of the new "nullification" doctrine, from criticism of New England Federalism as having been essentially selfish, derivative, and unpatriotic. Senator Robert Young Hayne (1791-1840), of South Carolina, who had been a member of the Senate since 1823, was conspicuous, in this debate, for his advocacy of the idea that a State might suspend Federal laws at its discretion; and his assertions to that effect, combined with sharp criticisms of Massachusetts, led Mr. Webster to make his famous reply. Mr. Hayne was subsequently Governor of South Carolina, at the time of the almost armed collision between that State and President Jackson, in 1832, over the nullification of tariff laws. At one time Governor Hayne actually issued a proclamation of resistance to the authority of the general government; but subsequently Congress modified the objectionable tariff provisions and the State repealed its nullification ordinance, which President Jackson's firmness had certainly made "null, void, and no law."

driven him from his true course. Let us imitate this prudence, and, before we float farther on the waves of this debate, refer to the point from which we departed, that we may at least be able to conjecture where we now are. I ask for the reading of the resolution before the Senate.

[The Secretary read the resolution, as follows:—

“*Resolved*, That the Committee on Public Lands be instructed to inquire and report the quantity of public lands remaining unsold within each State and Territory, and whether it be expedient to limit for a certain period the sales of the public lands to such lands only as have heretofore been offered for sale, and are now subject to entry at the minimum price. And, also, whether the office of Surveyor-General, and some of the land offices, may not be abolished without detriment to the public interest; or whether it be expedient to adopt measures to hasten the sales and extend more rapidly the surveys of the public lands.”]

The resolution which caused the debate.

We have thus heard, Sir, what the resolution is which is actually before us for consideration; and it will readily occur to every one, that it is almost the only subject about which something has not been said in the speech, running through two days, by which the Senate has been entertained by the gentleman from South Carolina. Every topic in the wide range of our public affairs, whether past or present, — everything, general or local, whether belonging to national politics or party politics, — seems to have attracted more or less of the honorable member’s attention, save only the resolution before the Senate. He has spoken of everything but the public lands; they have escaped his notice. To that subject, in all his excursions, he has not paid even the cold respect of a passing glance.

When this debate, Sir, was to be resumed, on Thursday morning, it so happened that it would have been convenient for me to be elsewhere. The honorable member, however, did not incline to put off the discussion to another day. He had a shot, he said, to return, and he wished to discharge it. That shot, Sir, which he thus kindly informed us was coming, that we might stand out of the way, or prepare ourselves to fall by it and die with decency, has now been received. Under all advantages, and with expectation awakened by the tone which preceded it, it has been discharged, and has spent its force. It may become me to say no more of its effect than that, if nobody is found, after all, either killed or wounded, it is not the first time, in the history of human affairs, that the vigor and success of the war have not quite come up to the lofty and sounding phrase of the manifesto.

Hayne's
"return-
shot."

The gentleman, Sir, in declining to postpone the debate, told the Senate, with the emphasis of his hand upon his heart, that there was something rankling *here*, which he wished to relieve. [Mr. Hayne rose, and disclaimed having used the word *rankling*.] It would not, Mr. President, be safe for the honorable member to appeal to those around him, upon the question whether he did in fact make use of that word. But he may have been unconscious of it. At any rate, it is enough that he disclaims it. But still, with or without the use of that particular word, he had yet something *here*, he said, of which he wished to rid himself by an immediate reply. In this respect, Sir, I have a great advantage over the honorable gentleman. There is nothing *here*, Sir, which gives me the slightest uneasiness; neither fear, nor anger, nor that which is some-

times more troublesome than either, the consciousness of having been in the wrong. There is nothing, either originating *here*, or now received *here* by the gentleman's shot. Nothing originating *here*, for I had not the slightest feeling of unkindness towards the honorable member. Some passages, it is true, had occurred since our acquaintance in this body, which I could have wished might have been otherwise; but I had used philosophy and forgotten them. I paid the honorable member the attention of listening with respect to his first speech; and when he sat down, though surprised, and I must even say astonished, at some of his opinions, nothing was farther from my intention than to commence any personal warfare. Through the whole of the few remarks I made in answer, I avoided, studiously and carefully, everything which I thought possible to be construed into disrespect. And, Sir, while there is thus nothing originating *here* which I have wished at any time, or now wish, to discharge, I must repeat, also, that nothing has been received *here* which *rankles*, or in any way gives me annoyance. I will not accuse the honorable member of violating the rules of civilized war; I will not say that he poisoned his arrows. But whether his shafts were or were not dipped in that which would have caused rankling if they had reached their destination, there was not, as it happened, quite strength enough in the bow to bring them to their mark. If he wishes now to gather up those shafts, he must look for them elsewhere; they will not be found fixed and quivering in the object at which they were aimed.

The honorable member complained that I had slept on his speech. I must have slept on it, or not slept at all. The moment the honorable member sat down, his



friend from Missouri rose, and, with much honeyed commendation of the speech, suggested that the impressions which it had produced were too charming and delightful to be disturbed by other sentiments or other sounds, and proposed that the Senate should adjourn. Would it have been quite amiable in me, Sir, to interrupt this excellent good feeling? Must I not have been absolutely malicious, if I could have thrust myself forward, to destroy sensations thus pleasing? Was it not much better and kinder, both to sleep upon them myself, and to allow others also the pleasure of sleeping upon them? But if it be meant, by sleeping upon his speech, that I took time to prepare a reply to it, it is quite a mistake. Owing to other engagements, I could not employ even the interval between the adjournment of the Senate and its meeting the next morning, in attention to the subject of this debate. Nevertheless, Sir, the mere matter of fact is undoubtedly true. I did sleep on the gentleman's speech, and slept soundly. And I slept equally well on his speech of yesterday, to which I am now replying. It is quite possible that in this respect, also, I possess some advantage over the honorable member, attributable, doubtless, to a cooler temperament on my part; for, in truth, I slept upon his speeches remarkably well.

But the gentleman inquires why *he* was made the object of such a reply. Why was *he* singled out? If an attack has been made on the East, he, he assures us, did not begin it; it was made by the gentleman from Missouri. Sir, I answered the gentleman's speech because I happened to hear it; and because, also, I chose to give an answer to that speech, which, if unanswered, I thought most likely to produce injurious impressions.

Thomas H.
Benton's
part in the
debate.

I did not stop to inquire who was the original drawer of the bill. I found a responsible indorser before me, and it was my purpose to hold him liable, and to bring him to his just responsibility, without delay. But, Sir, this interrogatory of the honorable member was only introductory to another. He proceeded to ask me



Thomas H. Benton.

whether I had turned upon him, in this debate, from the consciousness that I should find an overmatch, if I ventured on a contest with his friend from Missouri. If, Sir, the honorable member, *modestiae gratia*, had chosen thus to defer to his friend, and to pay him a compliment, without intentional disparagement to others, it would have been quite according to the friendly courtesies of debate, and

not at all ungrateful to my own feelings. I am not one of those, Sir, who esteem any tribute of regard, whether light and occasional, or more serious and deliberate, which may be bestowed on others, as so much unjustly withholden from themselves. But the tone and manner of the gentleman's question forbid me thus to interpret it. I am not at liberty to consider it as nothing more than a civility to his friend. It had an air of taunt and disparagement, something of the loftiness of asserted superiority, which does not allow me to pass it over without notice. It was put as a question for me to

answer, and so put as if it were difficult for me to answer, whether I deemed the member from Missouri an overmatch for myself in debate here. It seems to me, Sir, that this is extraordinary language, and an extraordinary tone, for the discussions of this body.

Matches and overmatches! Those terms are more applicable elsewhere than here, and fitter for other assemblies than this. Sir, the gentleman seems to forget where and what we are.

A Senate
of equals.

This is a Senate, a Senate of equals, of men of individual honor and personal character, and of absolute independence. We know no masters, we acknowledge no dictators. This is a hall for mutual consultation and discussion; not an arena for the exhibition of champions. I offer myself, Sir, as a match for no man; I throw the challenge of debate at no man's feet. But then, Sir, since the honorable member has put the question in a manner that calls for an answer, I will give him an answer; and I tell him, that, holding myself to be the humblest of the members here, I yet know nothing in the arm of his friend from Missouri, either alone or when aided by the arm of *his* friend from South Carolina, that need deter even me from espousing whatever opinions I may choose to espouse, from debating whenever I may choose to debate, or from speaking whatever I may see fit to say, on the floor of the Senate. Sir, when uttered as matter of commendation or compliment, I should dissent from nothing which the honorable member might say of his friend. Still less do I put forth any pretensions of my own. But when put to me as matter of taunt, I throw it back, and say to the gentleman that he could possibly say nothing less likely than such a comparison to wound my pride of personal character. The anger of

its tone rescued the remark from intentional irony, which otherwise, probably, would have been its general acceptance. But, Sir, if it be imagined that, by this mutual quotation and commendation; if it be supposed that, by casting the characters of the drama, assigning to each his part,—to one the attack, to another the cry of onset; or if it be thought that, by a loud and empty vaunt of anticipated victory, any laurels are to be won here; if it be imagined, especially, that any or all these things will shake any purpose of mine, I can tell the honorable member, once for all, that he is greatly mistaken, and that he is dealing with one of whose temper and character he has yet much to learn. Sir, I shall not allow myself, on this occasion, I hope on no occasion, to be betrayed into any loss of temper; but if provoked, as I trust I never shall be, into crimination and recrimination, the honorable member may perhaps find, that, in that contest, there will be blows to take as well as blows to give; that others can state comparisons as significant, at least, as his own; and that his impunity may possibly demand of him whatever powers of taunt and sarcasm he may possess. I commend him to a prudent husbandry of his resources.

But, Sir, the Coalition!¹ The Coalition! Ay, “the murdered Coalition!” The gentleman asks if I were led or frightened into this debate by the spectre of the Coalition. “Was it the ghost of the murdered Coali-

¹ It had been charged that John Quincy Adams, during his presidency (1825-1829), had sought to purchase the support of Webster by giving offices to members of the old Federalist party, then merging into the “National Republican” or Whig party. Furthermore, the opposition had declared that Adams’s bestowal of the Secretaryship of State upon Henry Clay was in accordance with a bargain by which Adams was to be supported by the Clay vote in the House of Representatives.

tion," he exclaims, "which haunted the member from Massachusetts; and which, like the ghost of Banquo, would never down?" "The murdered Co-^{The "Coalition."}alition!" Sir, this charge of a coalition, in reference to the late administration, is not original with the honorable member. It did not spring up in the Senate. Whether as a fact, as an argument, or as an embellishment, it is all borrowed. He adopts it, indeed, from a very low origin, and a still lower present condition. It is one of the thousand calumnies with which the press teemed, during an excited political canvass. It was a charge, of which there was not only no proof or probability, but which was in itself wholly impossible to be true. No man of common information ever believed a syllable of it.

Yet it was of that class of falsehoods which, by continued repetition, through all the organs of detraction and abuse, are capable of misleading those who are already far misled, and of further fanning passion already kindling into flame. Doubtless it served in its day, and in greater or less degree, the end designed by it. Having done that, it has sunk into the general mass of stale and loathed calumnies. It is the very



John Quincy Adams.

cast-off slough of a polluted and shameless press. Incapable of further mischief, it lies in the sewer, lifeless and despised. It is not now, Sir, in the power of the honorable member to give it dignity or decency, by attempting to elevate it, and to introduce it into the Senate. He cannot change it from what it is, an object of general disgust and scorn. On the contrary, the contact, if he choose to touch it, is more likely to drag him down, down, to the place where it lies itself.

But, Sir, the honorable member was not, for other reasons, entirely happy in his allusion to the story of Banquo's murder and Banquo's ghost. It was not, I think, the friends, but the enemies of the murdered Banquo, at whose bidding his spirit would not down. The honorable gentleman is fresh in his reading of the English classics, and can put me right if I am wrong; but, according to my poor recollection, it was at those who had begun with caresses and ended with foul and treacherous murder that the gory locks were shaken. The ghost of Banquo, like that of Hamlet, was an honest ghost. It disturbed no innocent man. It knew where its appearance would strike terror, and who would cry out, A ghost! It made itself visible in the right quarter, and compelled the guilty and the conscience-smitten, and none others, to start, with,

"Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo!
If I stand here, I saw him!"

Their eyeballs were seared (was it not so, Sir?) who had thought to shield themselves by concealing their

¹ Mr. Webster here quotes parts of lines 69 and 74 of Macbeth, Act III. Scene 14.

own hand, and laying the imputation of the crime on a low and hireling agency in wickedness; who had vainly attempted to stifle the workings of their own coward consciences by ejaculating through white lips and chattering teeth, "Thou canst not say I did it!" I have misread the great poet if those who had no way partaken in the deed of the death, either found that they were, or feared that they should be, pushed from their stools by the ghost of the slain, or exclaimed to a spectre created by their own fears and their own remorse, "Avaunt! and quit our sight!"

There is another particular, Sir, in which the honorable member's quick perception of resemblances might, I should think, have seen something in the story of Banquo, making it not altogether a subject of the most pleasant contemplation. Those who murdered Banquo, what did they win by it? Substantial good? Permanent power? Or disappointment, rather, and sore mortification, — dust and ashes, the common fate of vaulting ambition overleaping itself? Did not even-handed justice ere-long commend the poisoned chalice to their own lips? Did they not soon find that for another they had "filed their mind"? that their ambition, though apparently for the moment successful, had but put a barren sceptre in their grasp? Ay, Sir,

"a barren sceptre in their gripe,
*Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand,
No son of theirs succeeding."*

Sir, I need pursue the allusion no farther. I leave the honorable gentleman to run it out at his leisure, and to derive from it all the gratification it is calculated to administer. If he finds himself pleased with the associations, and prepared to be quite satisfied, though

the parallel should be entirely completed, I had almost said, I am satisfied also; but that I shall think of. Yes, Sir, I will think of that.

I spoke, Sir, of the Ordinance of 1787,¹ which prohibits slavery, in all future times, northwest of the

The Ordinance of 1787.

Ohio, as a measure of great wisdom and foresight, and one which had been attended with highly beneficial and permanent consequences.

I supposed that on this point no two gentlemen in the Senate could entertain different opinions. But the simple expression of this sentiment has led the gentleman not only into a labored defence of slavery, in the abstract, and on principle, but also into a warm accusation against me, as having attacked the system of domestic slavery now existing in the Southern States. For all this, there was not the slightest foundation in anything said or intimated by me. I did not utter a single word which any ingenuity could torture into an attack on the slavery of the South. I said, only, that it was highly wise and useful, in legis-

¹ The Ordinance of July 13, 1787, was an act of the Congress of the Confederation, — prior to the beginning of the constitutional government of the United States in 1789, — which, in its sixth article, said of the "Northwest Territory," organized by this Ordinance: "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted." Under the provisions of this Ordinance Ohio became a State in 1802. Says Johnston in his "History of American Politics": "The Ordinance of 1787 is noteworthy as an exercise by the Congress of the Confederacy of the right to exclude slavery from the territories. It will be found that the language of this Ordinance was copied in the efforts made in 1819 (Missouri), 1846 (Wilmot Proviso), and 1865 (XIIIth Amendment), to assert and maintain for the Federal Congress under the Constitution this power of regulating and abolishing slavery in the territories of the United States, and finally in the States as the result of civil war."

lating for the Northwestern country while it was yet a wilderness, to prohibit the introduction of slaves; and I added that I presumed there was no reflecting and intelligent person, in the neighboring State of Kentucky, who would doubt that, if the same prohibition had been extended, at the same early period, over that commonwealth, her strength and population would, at this day, have been far greater than they are. If these opinions be thought doubtful, they are nevertheless, I trust, neither extraordinary nor disrespectful. They attack nobody and menace nobody. And yet, Sir, the gentleman's optics have discovered, even in the mere expression of this sentiment, what he calls the very spirit of the Missouri question! He represents me as making an onset on the whole South, and manifesting a spirit which would interfere with, and disturb, their domestic condition!

Sir, this injustice no otherwise surprises me, than as it is committed here, and committed without the slightest pretence of ground for it. I say it only surprises me as being done here; for I know full well that it is, and has been, the settled policy of some persons in the South, for years, to represent the people of the North as disposed to interfere with them in their own exclusive and peculiar concerns. This is a delicate and sensitive point in Southern feeling; and of late years it has always been touched, and generally with effect, whenever the object has been to unite the whole South against Northern men or Northern measures. This feeling, always carefully kept alive, and maintained at too intense a heat to admit discrimination or reflection, is a lever of great power in our political machine. It moves vast bodies, and gives to

What Webster said, and did not say, about slavery.

them one and the same direction. But it is without adequate cause, and the suspicion which exists is wholly groundless. There is not, and never has been, a disposition in the North to interfere with these interests of the South. Such interference has never been supposed to be within the power of government; nor has it been in any way attempted. The slavery of the

Slavery a matter of domestic policy, left with the States.

South has always been regarded as a matter of domestic policy, left with the States themselves, and with which the Federal government had nothing to do. Certainly, Sir, I am, and ever have been, of that opinion.

The gentleman, indeed, argues that slavery, in the abstract, is no evil. Most assuredly I need not say I differ with him, altogether and most widely, on that point. I regard domestic slavery as one of the greatest

But a great evil.

evils, both moral and political. But whether it be a malady, and whether it be curable, and

if so, by what means; or, on the other hand, whether it be the *vulnus immedicabile* of the social system, I leave it to those whose right and duty it is to inquire and to decide. And this I believe, Sir, is, and uniformly has been, the sentiment of the North.

We approach, at length, Sir, to a more important part of the honorable gentleman's observations. Since

The public lands.

it does not accord with my views of justice and policy to give away the public lands

altogether, as a mere matter of gratuity, I am asked by the honorable gentleman on what ground it is that I consent to vote them away in particular instances. How, he inquires, do I reconcile with these professed sentiments, my support of measures appropriating portions of the lands to particular roads, particular canals,

particular rivers, and particular institutions of education in the West? This leads, Sir, to the real and wide difference in political opinion between the honorable gentleman and myself. On my part, I look upon all these objects as connected with the common good, fairly embraced in its object and its terms; he, on the contrary, deems them all, if good at all, only local good. This is our difference. The interrogatory which he proceeded to put at once explains this difference. "What interest," asks he, "has South Carolina in a canal in Ohio?" Sir, this very question is full of significance. It develops the gentleman's whole political system; and its answer expounds mine. Here we differ. I look upon a road over the Alleghanies, a canal round the falls of the Ohio, or a canal or railway from the Atlantic to the Western waters, as being an object large and extensive enough to be fairly said to be for the common benefit. The gentleman thinks otherwise, and this is the key to his construction of the powers of the government. He may well ask what interest has South Carolina in a canal in Ohio. On his system, it is true, she has no interest. On that system, Ohio and Carolina are different governments, and different countries; connected here, it is true, by some slight and ill-defined bond of union, but in all main respects separate and diverse. On that system, Carolina has no more interest in a canal in Ohio than in Mexico. The gentleman, therefore, only follows out his own principles; he does no more than arrive at the natural conclusions of his own doctrines; he only announces the true results of that creed which he has adopted himself, and would persuade others to adopt, when he thus declares that

Webster's
broad view
of national
relations to
internal im-
provements.

Public
works are
bonds of
union.

South Carolina has no interest in a public work in Ohio.

Sir, we narrow-minded people of New England do not reason thus. . Our notion of things is entirely different. We look upon the States, not as separated, but as united. We love to dwell on that union, and on the mutual happiness which it has so much promoted, and the common renown which it has so greatly contributed to acquire. In our contemplation, Carolina and Ohio are parts of the same country; States, united under the same general government, having interests common, associated, intermingled. In whatever is within the proper sphere of the constitutional power of this government, we look upon the States as one. We do not impose geographical limits to our patriotic feeling or regard; we do not follow rivers and mountains, and lines of latitude, to find boundaries, beyond which public improvements do not benefit us. We who come here, as agents and representatives of these narrow-minded and selfish men of New England, consider ourselves as bound to regard with an equal eye the good of the whole, in whatever is within our powers of legislation. Sir, if a railroad or canal, beginning in South Carolina and ending in South Carolina, appeared to me to be of national importance and national magnitude, believing, as I do, that the power of government extends to the encouragement of works of that description, if I were to stand up here and ask, What interest has Massachusetts in a railroad in South Carolina? I should not be willing to face my constituents. These same narrow-minded men would tell me that they had sent me to act for the whole country, and that one who possessed too little comprehension, either of intellect or feeling, one who

was not large enough, both in mind and in heart, to embrace the whole, was not fit to be intrusted with the interest of any part.

Sir, I do not desire to enlarge the powers of the government by unjustifiable construction, nor to exercise any not within a fair interpretation. But

when it is believed that a power does exist, then it is, in my judgment, to be exercised for the general benefit of the whole. So far as respects the exercise of such a power, the States are one. It was the very object of

The powers of government to be used for the general benefit of the whole.

the Constitution to create unity of interests to the extent of the powers of the general government. In

war and peace we are one; in commerce, one; because the authority of the general government reaches to war and peace, and to the regulation of commerce. I have never

One in war, in peace, and in commerce.

seen any more difficulty in erecting light-houses on the lakes than on the ocean; in improving the harbors of inland seas, than if they were within the ebb and flow of the tide; or in removing obstructions in the vast streams of the West, more than in any work to facilitate commerce on the Atlantic coast. If there be any power for one, there is power also for the other; and they are all and equally for the common good of the country.

There are other objects, apparently more local, or the benefit of which is less general, towards which, nevertheless, I have concurred with others to give aid by donations of land. It is proposed to construct a road, in or through one of the new States, in which this government possesses large quantities of land. Have the United States no right, or, as a great and untaxed proprietor, are they under no obligation to con-

tribute to an object thus calculated to promote the common good of all the proprietors, themselves included? And even with respect to education, which is the extreme case, let the question be considered. In the first place, as we have seen, it was made matter of compact with these States, that they should do their part to promote education. In the next place, our whole system of land laws proceeds on the idea that education is for the common good; because in every division a certain portion is uniformly reserved and appropriated for the use of schools. And, finally, have not these new States singularly strong claims, founded on the ground already stated, that the government is a great untaxed proprietor, in the ownership of the soil? It is a consideration of great importance, that probably there is in no part of the country, or of the world, so great call for the means of education, as in these new States, owing to the vast numbers of persons within those ages in which education and instruction are usually received, if received at all. This is the natural consequence of recency of settlement and rapid increase. The census of these States shows how great a proportion of the whole population occupies the classes between infancy and manhood. These are the wide fields, and here is the deep and quick soil for the seeds of knowledge and virtue; and this is the favored season, the very spring-time for sowing them. Let them be disseminated without stint. Let them be scattered with a bountiful hand, broadcast. Whatever the government can fairly do towards these objects, in my opinion, ought to be done.

These, Sir, are the grounds, succinctly stated, on which my votes for grants of lands for particular

objects rest; while I maintain, at the same time, that it is all a common fund, for the common benefit. And reasons like these, I presume, have influenced the votes of other gentlemen from New England. Those who have a different view of the powers of the government, of course, come to different conclusions, on these, as on other questions. I observed, when speaking on this subject before, that if we looked to any measure, whether for a road, a canal, or anything else, intended for the improvement of the West, it would be found that if the New England *ayes* were struck out of the lists of votes, the Southern *noes* would always have rejected the measure. The truth of this has not been denied, and cannot be denied. In stating this, I thought it just to ascribe it to the constitutional scruples of the South, rather than to any other less favorable or less charitable cause. But no sooner had I done this, than the honorable gentleman asks if I reproach him and his friends with their constitutional scruples. Sir, I reproach nobody. I stated a fact, and gave the most respectful reason for it that occurred to me. The gentleman cannot deny the fact; he may, if he choose, disclaim the reason. It is not long since I had occasion, in presenting a petition from his own State, to account for its being intrusted to my hands, by saying that the constitutional opinions of the gentleman and his worthy colleague prevented them from supporting it. Sir, did I state this as matter of reproach? Far from it. Did I attempt to find any other cause than an honest one for these scruples? Sir, I did not. It did not become me to doubt or to insinuate that the gentleman had either changed his sentiments, or that he had made up a set of constitutional opinions accommodated to any particular combination of politi-

cal occurrences. Had I done so, I should have felt that, while I was entitled to little credit in thus questioning other people's motives, I justified the whole world in suspecting my own. But how has the gentleman returned this respect for others' opinions? His own candor and justice, how have they been exhibited towards the motives of others, while he has been at so much pains to maintain, what nobody has disputed, the purity of his own? Why, Sir, he has asked *when*, and *how*, and *why* New England votes were found going for measures favorable to the West. He has demanded to be informed whether all this did not begin in 1825, and while the election of President was still pending.

Sir, to these questions retort would be justified; and it is both cogent and at hand. Nevertheless, I will answer the inquiry, not by retort, but by facts. I will tell the gentleman *when*, and *how*, and *why* New England has supported measures favorable to the West. I have already referred to the early history of the government, to the first acquisition of the lands, to the original laws for disposing of them, and for governing the territories where they lie; and have shown the influence of New England men and New England principles in all these leading measures. I should not be pardoned were I to go over that ground again. Coming to more recent times, and to measures of a less general character, I have endeavored to prove that everything of this kind, designed for Western improvement, has depended on the votes of New England; all this is true beyond the power of contradiction. And now, Sir, there are two measures to which I will refer, not so ancient as to belong to the early history of the public lands, and not so recent as to be on this side of the period when

New Eng-
land's aid to
Western im-
provements.

the gentleman charitably imagines a new direction may have been given to New England feeling and New England votes. These measures, and the New England votes in support of them, may be taken as samples and specimens of all the rest.

In 1820 (observe, Mr. President, in 1820) the people of the West besought Congress for a reduction in the price of lands. In favor of that reduction, New England, with a delegation of forty members in the other house, gave thirty-three votes, and one only against it. The four Southern States, with more than fifty members, gave thirty-two votes for it, and seven against it. Again, in 1821 (observe again, Sir, the time), the law passed for the relief of the purchasers of the public lands. This



Robert Y. Hayne.

was a measure of vital importance to the West, and more especially to the Southwest. It authorized the relinquishment of contracts for lands which had been entered into at high prices, and a reduction in other cases of not less than thirty-seven and a half per cent on the purchase-money. Many millions of dollars, six or seven, I believe, probably much more, were relinquished by this law. On this bill, New England, with

her forty members, gave more affirmative votes than the four Southern States, with their fifty-two or fifty-three members. These two are far the most important general measures respecting the public lands which have been adopted within the last twenty years. They took place in 1820 and 1821. That is the time *when*.

As to the manner *how*, the gentleman already sees that it was by voting in solid column for the required relief; and, lastly, as to the cause *why*, I tell the gentleman it was because the members from New England thought the measures just and salutary; because they entertained towards the West neither envy, hatred, nor malice; because they deemed it becoming them, as just and enlightened public men, to meet the exigency which had arisen in the West with the appropriate measure of relief; because they felt it due to their own characters, and the characters of their New England predecessors in this government, to act towards the new States in the spirit of a liberal, patronizing, magnanimous policy. So much, Sir, for the cause *why*; and I hope that by this time, Sir, the honorable gentleman is satisfied; if not, I do not know *when*, or *how*, or *why* he ever will be.

Professing to be provoked by what he chose to consider a charge made by me against South Carolina, the honorable member, Mr. President, has taken up a new crusade against New England. Leaving altogether the subject of the public lands, in which his success, perhaps, had been neither distinguished nor satisfactory, and letting go, also, of the topic of the tariff, he sallied forth in a general assault on the opinions, politics, and parties of New England, as they have been exhibited in the last

Hayne's
attack on
New
England.

thirty years. This is natural. The "narrow policy" of the public lands had proved a legal settlement in South Carolina, and was not to be removed. The "accursed policy" of the tariff, also, had established the fact of its birth and parentage in the same State. No wonder, therefore, the gentleman wished to carry the war, as he expressed it, into the enemy's country. Prudently willing to quit these subjects, he was, doubtless, desirous of fastening on others, which could not be transferred south of Mason and Dixon's line.¹ The politics of New England became his theme; and it was in this part of his speech, I think, that he menaced me with such sore discomfiture. Discomfiture! Why, Sir, when he attacks anything which I maintain, and overthrows it, when he turns the right or left of any position which I take up, when he drives me from any ground I choose to occupy, he may then talk of discomfiture, but not till that distant day. What has he done? Has he maintained his own charges? Has he proved what he alleged? Has he sustained himself in his attack on the government, and on the history of the North, in the matter of the public lands? Has he disproved a fact, refuted a proposition, weakened an argument, maintained by me? Has he come within beat of drum of any position of mine? Oh, no; but he has "carried the war into the enemy's country"! Carried the war into the enemy's country! Yes, Sir, and what sort of a war has he made of it? Why, Sir, he has stretched a drag-net over the whole surface of perished pamphlets, indiscreet sermons, frothy paragraphs, and fuming popular addresses, — over whatever the pulpit in its moments of alarm, the press in its heats, and parties in

¹ The line between Pennsylvania, a free State, and Maryland, a slave State; originally run by two surveyors bearing these names.

their extravagance, have severally thrown off in times of general excitement and violence. He has thus swept together a mass of such things as, but that they are now old and cold, the public health would have required him rather to leave in their state of dispersion. For a good long hour or two we had the unbroken pleasure of listening to the honorable member while he recited with his usual grace and spirit, and with evident high gusto, speeches, pamphlets, addresses, and all the *acaceras* of the political press, such as warm heads produce in warm times; and such as it would be "discomfiture" indeed for any one, whose taste did not delight in that sort of reading, to be obliged to peruse. This is his war. This it is to carry war into the enemy's country. It is in an invasion of this sort that he flatters himself with the expectation of gaining laurels fit to adorn a Senator's brow!

Mr. President, I shall not — it will not, I trust, be expected that I should — either now or at any time, separate this farrago into parts, and answer and examine its components. I shall barely bestow upon it all a general remark or two.

In the run of forty years, Sir, under this Constitution, we have experienced sundry successive violent party contests. Party arose, indeed, with the Constitution itself, and, in some form or other, has attended it through the greater part of its history. Whether any other constitution than the old Articles of Confederation was desirable, was itself a question on which parties divided; if a new constitution were framed, what powers should be given to it was another question; and when it had been formed, what was, in fact, the just extent of the powers actually conferred was a third. Parties, as we know, existed under the

Party contests under the Constitution.

first administration, as distinctly marked as those which have manifested themselves at any subsequent period. The contest immediately preceding the political change in 1801, and that, again, which existed at the commencement of the late war, are other instances of party excitement of something more than usual strength and intensity. In all these conflicts there was, no doubt, much of violence on both and all sides. It would be impossible, if one had a fancy for such employment, to adjust the relative *quantum* of violence between these contending parties. There was enough in each, as must always be expected in popular governments. With a great deal of popular and decorous discussion, there was mingled a great deal, also, of declamation, virulence, crimination, and abuse. In regard to any party, probably, at one of the leading epochs in the history of parties, enough may be found to make out another inflamed exhibition, not unlike that with which the honorable member has edified us. For myself, Sir, I shall not rake among the rubbish of bygone times to see what I can find, or whether I cannot find something by which I can fix a blot on the escutcheon of any State, any party, or any part of the country.

General Washington's administration was steadily and zealously maintained, as we all know, by New England. It was violently opposed elsewhere. We know in what quarter he had the most earnest, constant, and persevering support, in all his great and leading measures. We know where his private and personal character was held in the highest degree of attachment and veneration; and we know, too, where his measures were opposed, his services slighted, and his character vilified. We know, or we might know, if we turned to the journals, who

Political
attacks
upon Wash-
ington.

expressed respect, gratitude, and regret, when he retired from the chief magistracy, and who refused to express either respect, gratitude, or regret. I shall not open those journals. Publications more abusive or scurrilous never saw the light, than were sent forth against Washington and all his leading measures, from presses south of New England. But I shall not look them up. I employ no scavengers; no one is in attendance on me, furnishing such means of retaliation; and if there were, with an ass's load of them, with a bulk as huge as that which the gentleman himself has produced, I would not touch one of them. I see enough of the violence of our own times, to be no way anxious to rescue from forgetfulness the extravagances of times past.

Besides, what is all this to the present purpose? It has nothing to do with the public lands, in regard to which the attack was begun; and it has nothing to do with those sentiments and opinions which, I have thought, tend to disunion, and all of which the honorable member seems to have adopted himself, and undertaken to defend. New England has, at times, so argues the gentleman, held opinions as dangerous as those which he now holds. Suppose this were so; why should *he* therefore abuse New England? If he finds himself countenanced by acts of hers, how is it that, while he relies on these acts, he covers, or seeks to cover, their authors with reproach? But, Sir, if, in the course of forty years, there have been undue effervescences of party in New England, has the same thing happened nowhere else? Party animosity and party outrage, not in New England, but elsewhere, denounced President Washington, not only as a Federalist, but as a Tory, a British agent, a man who, in his high office, sanctioned corruption. But does the honorable member

suppose, if I had a tender here who should put such an effusion of wickedness and folly into my hand, that I would stand up and read it against the South? Parties ran into great heats again in 1799 and 1800. What was said, Sir, or rather what was not said, in those years, against John Adams, one of the committee that drafted the Declaration of Independence, and its admitted ablest defender on the floor of Congress? If the gentleman wishes to increase his stores of party abuse and frothy violence, if he has a determined proclivity to such pursuits, there are treasures of that sort south of the Potomac, much to his taste, yet untouched. I shall not touch them.

The parties which divided the country at the commencement of the late war were violent. But then there was violence on both sides, and violence in every State. Minorities and majorities were equally violent. There was no more violence against the war in New England than in other States; nor any more appearance of violence, except that, owing to a dense population, greater facility of assembling, and more presses, there may have been more in quantity spoken and printed there than in some other places. In the article of sermons, too, New England is somewhat more abundant than South Carolina; and for that reason the chance of finding here and there an exceptionable one may be greater. I hope, too, there are more good ones. Opposition may have been more formidable in New England, as it embraced a larger portion of the whole population; but it was no more unrestrained in principle, or violent in manner. The minorities dealt quite as harshly with their own State governments as the majorities dealt with the administration here. There were presses on

Political
parties in
1812.

both sides, popular meetings on both sides, ay, and pulpits on both sides also. The gentleman's purveyors have only catered for him among the productions of one side. I certainly shall not supply the deficiency by furnishing samples of the other. I leave to him, and to them, the whole concern.

It is enough for me to say that if, in any part of this their grateful occupation, if, in all their researches, they find anything in the history of Massachusetts, or New England, or in the proceedings of any legislative or other public body, disloyal to the Union, speaking slightly of its value, proposing to break it up, or recommending non-intercourse with neighboring States, on account of difference of political opinion, then, Sir, I give them all up to the honorable gentleman's unrestrained rebuke; expecting, however, that he will extend his buffetings in like manner *to all similar proceedings, wherever else found.*

The eulogium pronounced by the honorable gentleman on the character of the State of South Carolina, for her Revolutionary and other merits, meets my hearty concurrence. I shall not acknowledge that the honorable member goes before me in regard for whatever of distinguished talent, or distinguished character, South Carolina has produced. I claim part of the honor, I partake in the pride, of her great names. I claim them for countrymen, one and all, the Laurenses, the Rutledges, the Pinckneys, the Sumpters, the Marions, Americans all, whose fame is no more to be hemmed in by State lines, than their talents and patriotism were capable of being circumscribed within the same narrow limits. In their day and generation they served and honored the country,

Tribute
to South
Carolina.

and the whole country; and their renown is of the treasures of the whole country. Him whose honored name the gentleman himself bears,—does he esteem me less capable of gratitude for his patriotism, or sympathy for his sufferings, than if his eyes had first opened upon the light of Massachusetts, instead of South Carolina? Sir, does he suppose it in his power to exhibit a Carolina name so bright as to produce envy in my bosom? No, Sir, increased gratification and delight, rather. I thank God that, if I am gifted with little of the spirit which is able to raise mortals to the skies, I have yet none, as I trust, of that other spirit, which would drag angels down. When I shall be found, Sir, in my place here in the Senate, or elsewhere, to sneer at public merit, because it happens to spring up beyond the little limits of my own State or neighborhood; when I refuse, for any such cause or for any cause, the homage due to American talent, to elevated patriotism, to sincere devotion to liberty and the country; or, if I see an uncommon endowment of Heaven, if I see extraordinary capacity and virtue, in any son of the South, and if, moved by local prejudice or gangrened by State jealousy, I get up here to abate the tithe of a hair from his just character and just fame, may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!

Sir, let me recur to pleasing recollections; let me indulge in refreshing remembrance of the past; let me remind you that, in early times, no States cherished greater harmony, both of principle and feeling, than Massachusetts and South Carolina. Would to God that harmony might again return! Shoulder to shoulder they went through the Revolution, hand in hand they stood round the administration of Washington, and felt

Massachu-
setts and
South
Carolina
in the
Revolution.

his own great arm lean on them for support. Unkind feeling, if it exist, alienation, and distrust are the growth, unnatural to such soils, of false principles since sown. They are weeds, the seeds of which that same great arm never scattered.

Mr. President, I shall enter on no encomium upon Massachusetts; she needs none. There she is. Behold her, and judge for yourselves. There is her history; the world knows it by heart. The past, at least, is secure. There is Boston, and Concord, and Lexington, and Bunker Hill; and there they will remain forever. The bones of her sons, falling in the great struggle for Independence, now lie mingled with the soil of every State from New England to Georgia; and there they will lie forever. And, Sir, where American Liberty raised its first voice, and where its youth was nurtured and sustained, there it still lives, in the strength of its manhood and full of its original spirit. If discord and disunion shall wound it, if party strife and blind ambition shall hawk at and tear it, if folly and madness, if uneasiness under salutary and necessary restraint, shall succeed in separating it from that Union by which alone its existence is made sure, it will stand, in the end, by the side of that cradle in which its infancy was rocked; it will stretch forth its arm with whatever of vigor it may still retain over the friends who gather round it; and it will fall at last, if fall it must, amidst the proudest monuments of its own glory, and on the very spot of its origin.

There yet remains to be performed, Mr. President, by far the most grave and important duty which I feel to be devolved on me by this occasion. It is to state, and to defend, what I conceive to be the true principles of

Defence
of Massa-
chusetts.



the Constitution under which we are here assembled. I might well have desired that so weighty a task should have fallen into other and abler hands. I could have wished that it should have been executed by those whose character and experience give weight and influence to their opinions, such as cannot possibly belong to mine. But, Sir, I have met the occasion, not sought it; and I shall proceed to state my own sentiments, without challenging for them any particular regard; with studied plainness, and as much precision as possible.

The true principles of the Constitution.

I understand the honorable gentleman from South Carolina to maintain that it is a right of the State legislatures to interfere, whenever, in their judgment, this government transcends its constitutional limits, and to arrest the operation of its laws.

May State legislatures arrest national laws?

I understand him to maintain this right, as a right existing *under* the Constitution, not as a right to overthrow it on the ground of extreme necessity, such as would justify violent revolution.

I understand him to maintain an authority, on the part of the States, thus to interfere, for the purpose of correcting the exercise of power by the general government, of checking it, and of compelling it to conform to their opinion of the extent of its powers.

I understand him to maintain, that the ultimate power of judging of the constitutional extent of its own authority is not lodged exclusively in the general government, or any branch of it; but that, on the contrary, the States may lawfully decide for themselves, and each State for itself, whether, in a given case, the act of the general government transcends its power.

Are the States the final judges of the acts of the general government?

I understand him to insist that if the exigency of the case, in the opinion of any State government, require it, such State government may, by its own sovereign authority, annul an act of the general government which it deems plainly and palpably unconstitutional.

This is the sum of what I understand from him to be the South Carolina doctrine, and the doctrine which he maintains. I propose to consider it, and compare it with the Constitution. Allow me to say, as a preliminary remark, that I call this the South Carolina doctrine only because the gentleman himself has so denominated it. I do not feel at liberty to say that South Carolina, as a State, has ever advanced these sentiments. I hope she has not, and never may. That a great majority of her people are opposed to the tariff laws, is doubtless true. That a majority, somewhat less than that just mentioned, conscientiously believe these laws unconstitutional, may probably also be true. But that any majority holds to the right of direct State interference at State discretion, the right of nullifying acts of Congress by acts of State legislation, is more than I know, and what I shall be slow to believe.

That there are individuals besides the honorable gentleman who do maintain these opinions is quite certain. I recollect the recent expression of a sentiment which circumstances attending its utterance and publication justify us in supposing was not unpremeditated: "The sovereignty of the State, — never to be controlled, construed, or decided on, but by her own feelings of honorable justice."

[Mr. Hayne here rose and said that for the purpose of being clearly understood, he would state that his proposition was in the words of the Virginia resolution, as follows: —

“That this assembly doth explicitly and peremptorily declare, that it views the powers of the Federal government as resulting from the compact to which the States are parties, as limited by the plain sense and intention of the instrument constituting that compact, as no farther valid than they are authorized by the grants enumerated in that compact; and that, in case of a deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise of other powers not granted by the said compact, the States who are parties thereto have the right, and are in duty bound, to interpose, for arresting the progress of the evil, and for maintaining within their respective limits the authorities, rights, and liberties appertaining to them.”¹

Mr. Webster resumed: —]

I am quite aware, Mr. President, of the existence of the resolution which the gentleman read, and has now repeated, and that he relies on it as his authority. I know the source, too, from which it is understood to have proceeded. I need not say that I have much respect for the constitutional opinions of Mr. Madison; they would weigh greatly with me always. But before the authority of his opinion be vouched for the gentleman's proposition, it will be

Webster
admits the
right of
revolution.

¹ The “Virginia Resolutions of 1798,” of which the most important is here quoted, and the similar Kentucky Resolutions of the same year, were protests of the Republican, or Anti-Federalist, legislatures of the two States, against the “Alien and Sedition Laws” passed by the Federalist majority in Congress. These laws were the outgrowth of an almost warlike feeling between the United States and France, due to a variety of causes, for the most part discreditable to France. They authorized the President to order out of the country any foreigner he deemed dangerous; and imposed fines and imprisonment upon alleged conspirators against Government measures, or libellers of Congress or the President. The laws were deemed by the Anti-Federalists to be autocratic and semi-monarchical. The Virginia protesting resolutions were put into form by James Madison, afterwards President.

proper to consider what is the fair interpretation of that resolution, to which Mr. Madison is understood to have given his sanction. As the gentleman construes it, it is an authority for him. Possibly he may not have adopted the right construction. That resolution declares that *in the case of the dangerous exercise of powers not granted by the general government, the States may interpose to arrest the progress of the evil*. But how interpose, and what does this declaration purport? Does it mean no more than that there may be extreme cases, in which the people, in any mode of assembling, may resist usurpation, and relieve themselves from a tyrannical government? No one will deny this. Such resistance is not only acknowledged to be just in America, but in England also Blackstone admits as much, in the theory, and practice, too, of the English constitution. We, Sir, who oppose the Carolina doctrine, do not deny that the people may, if they choose, throw off any government when it becomes oppressive and intolerable, and erect a better in its stead. We all know that civil institutions are established for the public benefit, and that when they cease to answer the ends of their existence they may be changed. But I do not understand the doctrine now contended for to be that which, for the sake of distinction, we may call the right of revolution. I understand the gentleman to maintain that without revolution, without civil commotion, without rebellion, a remedy for supposed abuse and transgression of the powers of the general government lies in a direct appeal to the interference of the State governments.

[Mr. Hayne here rose and said that he did not contend for the mere right of revolution, but for the right of constitutional resistance. What he maintained was, that in case of a plain, palpable violation of the

Constitution by the general government, a State may interpose; and that this interposition is constitutional.

Mr. Webster resumed:—]

So, Sir, I understood the gentleman, and am happy to find that I did not misunderstand him. What he contends for is that it is constitutional to interrupt the administration of the Constitution itself, in the hands of those who are chosen and sworn to administer it, by the direct interference, in form of law, of the States, in virtue of their sovereign capacity. The inherent right in the people to reform their government I do not deny; and they have another right, and that is to resist unconstitutional laws, without overturning the government. It is no doctrine of mine that unconstitutional laws bind the people. The great question is, Whose prerogative is it to decide on the constitutionality or unconstitutionality of the laws? On that the main debate hinges. The proposition that, in case of a supposed violation of the Constitution by Congress, the States have a constitutional right to interfere and annul the law of Congress, is the proposition of the gentleman. I do not admit it. If the gentleman had intended no more than to assert the right of revolution for justifiable cause, he would have said only what all agree to. But I cannot conceive that there can be a middle course, between submission to the laws, when regularly pronounced constitutional, on the one hand, and open resistance, which is revolution or rebellion, on the other. I say the right of a State to annul a law of Congress cannot be maintained, but on the ground of the inalienable right of man to resist oppression; that is to say, upon the ground of revolution. I admit that there is an ultimate violent remedy, above the Constitution and in defiance of the Consti-

No middle course between revolution and submission to constitutional laws.

tution, which may be resorted to when a revolution is to be justified. But I do not admit that, under the Constitution and in conformity with it, there is any mode in which a State government, as a member of the Union, can interfere and stop the progress of the general government, by force of her own laws, under any circumstances whatever.

A concise statement of Webster's whole argument.

This leads us to inquire into the origin of this government and the source of its power. Whose agent is it? Is it the creature of the State legislatures, or the creature of the people? If the government of the United States be the agent of the State governments, then they may control it, provided they can agree in the manner

The source of the power of the government of the United States.

of controlling it; if it be the agent of the people, then the people alone can control it, restrain it, modify, or reform it. It is observable enough that the doctrine for which the honorable gentleman contends leads him to the necessity of maintaining, not only that this general government is the creature of the States, but that it is the creature of each of the States severally, so that each may assert the power for itself of determining

The people's government.

whether it acts within the limits of its authority. It is the servant of four-and-twenty masters, of different wills and different purposes, and yet bound to obey all. This absurdity (for it seems no less)

The Constitution declared by the people to be the supreme law.

arises from a misconception as to the origin of this government and its true character. It is, Sir, the people's Constitution, the people's government, made for the people, made by the people, and answerable to the people.

The people of the United States have declared that this Constitution shall be the supreme law. We must

either admit the proposition, or dispute their authority. The States are, unquestionably, sovereign, so far as their sovereignty is not affected by this supreme law. But the State legislatures, as political bodies, however sovereign, are yet not sovereign over the people. So far as the people have given power to the general government, so far the grant is unquestionably good, and the government holds of the people, and not of the State governments. We are all agents of the same supreme power, the people. The general government and the State governments derive their authority from the same source. Neither can, in relation to the other, be called primary, though one is definite and restricted, and the other general and residuary. The national government possesses those powers which it can be shown the people have conferred on it, and no more. All the rest belongs to the State governments, or to the people themselves. So far as the people have restrained State sovereignty, by the expression of their will, in the Constitution of the United States, so far, it must be admitted, State sovereignty is effectually controlled. I do not contend that it is, or ought to be, controlled farther. The sentiment to which I have referred propounds that State sovereignty is only to be controlled by its own "feeling of justice"; that is to say, it is not to be controlled at all, for one who is to follow his own feelings is under no legal control. Now, however men may think this ought to be, the fact is, that the people of the United States have chosen to impose control on State sovereignties. There are those, doubtless, who wish they had been left without restraint; but the Constitution has ordered the matter differently. To make war, for instance, is an exercise

The general government and the State governments derive their authority from the people.

of sovereignty; but the Constitution declares that no State shall make war. To coin money is another exercise of sovereign power; but no State is at liberty to coin money. Again, the Constitution says that no sovereign State shall be so sovereign as to make a treaty. These prohibitions, it must be confessed, are a control

General powers as over against State powers. on the State sovereignty of South Carolina, as well as of the other States, which does not arise "from her own feelings of honorable justice." The opinion referred to, therefore, is in defiance of the plainest provisions of the Constitution.

There are other proceedings of public bodies which have already been alluded to, and to which I refer again for the purpose of ascertaining more fully what is the length and breadth of that doctrine, denominated the Carolina doctrine, which the honorable member has now stood up on this floor to maintain. In one of them I find it resolved, that "the tariff of 1828, and every other tariff designed to promote one branch of industry at the expense of others, is contrary to the meaning and intention of the Federal compact; and such a dangerous, palpable, and deliberate usurpation of power, by a determined majority, wielding the general government beyond

The "sovereign" States. the limits of its delegated powers, as calls upon the States which compose the suffering minority, in their sovereign capacity, to exercise the powers which, as sovereigns, necessarily devolve upon them, when their compact is violated."

Observe, Sir, that this resolution holds the tariff of 1828, and every other tariff designed to promote one branch of industry at the expense of another, to be such a dangerous, palpable, and deliberate usurpation of power, as calls upon the States, in their sovereign capacity, to

interfere by their own authority. This denunciation, Mr. President, you will please to observe, includes our old tariff of 1816, as well as all others; be-
 cause that was established to promote the
 interest of the manufacturers of cotton, to the
 manifest and admitted injury of the Calcutta
 cotton trade. Observe, again, that all the qualifications
 are here rehearsed and charged upon the tariff, which
 are necessary to bring the case within the gentleman's
 proposition. The tariff is a usurpation; it is a danger-
 ous usurpation; it is a palpable usurpation; it is a deliber-
 ate usurpation. It is such a usurpation, therefore, as
 calls upon the States to exercise their right of interfer-
 ence. Here is a case, then, within the gentleman's prin-
 ciples, and all his qualifications of his principles. It is
 a case for action. The Constitution is plainly, danger-
 ously, palpably, and deliberately violated; and the States
 must interpose their own authority to arrest the law.
 Let us suppose the State of South Carolina to express
 this same opinion, by the voice of her legislature. That
 would be very imposing; but what then? Is the voice
 of one State conclusive? It so happens that, at the very
 moment when South Carolina resolves that the tariff
 laws are unconstitutional, Pennsylvania and Kentucky
 resolve exactly the reverse. *They* hold those laws to be
 both highly proper and strictly constitutional. And now,
 Sir, how does the honorable member propose to deal with
 this case? How does he relieve us from this difficulty,
 upon any principle of his? His construction gets us
 into it; how does he propose to get us out?

Are protec-
 tive tariffs
 unconstitu-
 tional usur-
 pations?

In Carolina, the tariff is a palpable, deliberate usurpa-
 tion; Carolina, therefore, may nullify it, and refuse to
 pay the duties. In Pennsylvania, it is both clearly
 constitutional and highly expedient; and there the

duties are to be paid. And yet we live under a government of uniform laws, and under a Constitution too, which contains an express provision, as it happens, that all duties shall be equal in all the States. Does not this approach absurdity?

Nullification would make uniform laws impossible.

If there be no power to settle such questions, independent of either of the States, is not the whole Union a rope of sand? Are we not thrown back again, precisely, upon the old Confederation?

It is too plain to be argued. Four-and-twenty interpreters of constitutional law, each with a power to decide for itself, and none with authority to bind anybody else, and this constitutional law the only bond of their union! What is such a state of things but a mere connection during pleasure, or, to use the phraseology of the times, *during feeling*? And that feeling, too, not the feeling of the people, who established the Constitution, but the feeling of the State governments!

The Union, with nullification, a mere connection during pleasure.

The gentleman has found no case, he can find none, to support his own opinions by New England authority. New England has studied the Constitution in other schools and under other teachers. She looks upon it with other regards, and deems more highly and reverently both of its just authority and its utility and excellence. The history of her legislative proceedings may be traced. The ephemeral effusions of temporary bodies, called together by the excitement of the occasion, may be hunted up; they have been hunted up. The opinions and votes of her public men, in and out of Congress, may be explored. It will all be in vain. The Carolina doctrine can derive from her neither counte-

nance nor support. She rejects it now; she always did reject it; and till she loses her senses, she always will reject it. The honorable member has referred to expressions on the subject of the embargo law, made in this place, by an honorable and venerable gentleman,¹ now favoring us with his presence. He quotes that distinguished Senator as saying that, in his judgment, the embargo law was unconstitutional, and that therefore, in his opinion, the people were not bound to obey it. That, Sir, is perfectly constitutional language. An unconstitutional law is not binding; *but then it does not rest with a resolution or a law of a State legislature to decide whether an act of Congress be or be not constitutional.* An unconstitutional act of Congress would not bind the people of this District, although they have no legislature to interfere in their behalf;² and, on the other hand, a constitutional law of Congress does bind the citizens of every State, although all their legislatures should undertake to annul it by act or resolution. The venerable Connecticut Senator is a constitutional lawyer, of sound principles and enlarged knowledge; a statesman practised and experienced, bred in the company of Washington, and holding just views upon the nature of our governments. He believed the embargo unconstitutional, and so did others; but what then? Who did he suppose was to decide that question? The State legislatures? Certainly not. No such sentiment ever escaped his lips.

New Eng-
land rejects
the South
Carolina
doctrine.

Let us follow up, Sir, this New England opposition to the embargo laws; let us trace it, till we discern the

¹ James Hillhouse (1754-1832), of Connecticut.

² The District of Columbia is governed directly by Congress, but sends no representative thereto.

principle which controlled and governed New England throughout the whole course of that opposition. We shall then see what similarity there is between the New England school of constitutional opinions and this modern Carolina school. The gentleman, I think, read a petition from some single individual addressed to the legislature of Massachusetts, asserting the Carolina doctrine, that is, the right of State interference to arrest the laws of the Union. The fate of that petition shows the sentiment of the legislature. It met no favor. The opinions of Massachusetts were very different. They had been expressed in 1798, in answer to the resolutions of Virginia, and she did not depart from them, nor bend them to the times. Misgoverned, wronged, oppressed, as she felt herself to be, she still held fast her integrity to the Union. The gentleman may find in her proceedings much evidence of dissatisfaction with the measures of government, and great and deep dislike to the embargo; all this makes the case so much the stronger for her; for, notwithstanding all this dissatisfaction and dislike, she still claimed no right to sever the bonds of the Union. There was heat, and there was anger in her political feeling. Be it so; but neither her heat nor her anger betrayed her into infidelity to the government. The gentleman labors to prove that she disliked the embargo¹ as much as South Carolina dislikes the tariff, and expressed her dislike as strongly. Be it so; but did she propose the Carolina remedy? did she threaten

¹ The Embargo Bill of 1807 prohibited American vessels from foreign trade, and foreign vessels from American, only coasting trade being permitted. It was directed against England, and was supported by the Anti-Federalists and bitterly opposed by the Federalists. For the time it almost destroyed American commerce, and bore especially heavily on New England.

to interfere, by State authority, to annul the laws of the Union? That is the question for the gentleman's consideration.

No doubt, Sir, a great majority of the people of New England conscientiously believed the embargo law of 1807 unconstitutional; as conscientiously, New England attitude toward the embargo of 1807. certainly, as the people of South Carolina hold that opinion of the tariff. They reasoned thus: Congress has power to regulate commerce; but here is a law, they said, stopping all commerce, and stopping it indefinitely. The law is perpetual; that is, it is not limited in point of time, and must of course continue until it shall be repealed by some other law. It is as perpetual, therefore, as the law against treason or murder. Now, is this regulating commerce, or destroying it? Is it guiding, controlling, giving the rule to commerce, as a subsisting thing, or is it putting an end to it altogether? Nothing is more certain than that a majority in New England deemed this law a violation of the Constitution. The very case required by the gentleman to justify State interference had then arisen. Massachusetts believed this law to be "a deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise of a power not granted by the Constitution." Deliberate it was, for it was long continued; palpable she thought it, as no words in the Constitution gave the power, and only a construction, in her opinion most violent, raised it; dangerous it was, since it threatened utter ruin to her most important interests. Here, then, was a Carolina case. How did Massachusetts deal with it? It was, as she thought, a plain, manifest, palpable violation of the Constitution, and it brought ruin to her doors. Thousands of families, and hundreds of thousands of individuals, were beggared by it. While

she saw and felt all this, she saw and felt also, that, as a measure of national policy, it was perfectly futile; that the country was no way benefited by that which caused so much individual distress; that it was efficient only for the production of evil, and all that evil inflicted on ourselves. In such a case, under such circumstances, how did Massachusetts demean herself? Sir, she remonstrated, she memorialized, she addressed herself to the general government, not exactly "with the concentrated energy of passion," but with her own strong sense, and the energy of sober conviction. But she did not interpose the arm of her own power to arrest the law, and break the embargo. Far from it. Her principles bound her to two things; and she followed her principles, lead where they might. First, to submit to every constitutional law of Congress; and secondly, if the constitutional validity of the law be doubted, to refer that question to the decision of the proper tribunals. The first principle is vain and ineffectual without the second. A majority of us in New England believed the embargo law unconstitutional; but the great question was, and always will be in such cases, Who is to decide this? Who is to judge between the people and the government? And, Sir, it is quite plain that the Constitution of the United States confers on the government itself, to be exercised by its appropriate department, and under its own responsibility to the people, this power of deciding ultimately and conclusively upon the just extent of its own authority. If this had not been done, we should not have advanced a single step beyond the old Confederation.

The government has power of deciding ultimately on the just extent of its own authority.

Sir, the human mind is so constituted that the merits of both sides of a controversy appear very clear, and

very palpable, to those who respectively espouse them; and both sides usually grow clearer as the controversy advances. South Carolina sees unconstitutionality in the tariff; she sees oppression there also, and she sees danger. Pennsylvania, with a vision not less sharp, looks at the same tariff, and sees no such thing in it; she sees it all constitutional, all useful, all safe. The faith of South Carolina is strengthened by opposition, and she now not only sees, but *resolves*, that the tariff is palpably unconstitutional, oppressive, and dangerous; but Pennsylvania, not to be behind her neighbors, and equally willing to strengthen her own faith by a confident asseveration, *resolves*, also, and gives to every warm affirmative of South Carolina, a plain, downright, Pennsylvania negative. South Carolina, to show the strength and unity of her opinion, brings her assembly to a unanimity, within seven voices; Pennsylvania, not to be outdone in this respect any more than in others, reduces her dissentient fraction to a single vote. Now, Sir, again I ask the gentleman, What is to be done? Are these States both right? Is he bound to consider them both right? If not, which is in the wrong? or rather, which has the best right to decide? And if he, and if I, are not to know what the Constitution means, and what it is, till those two State legislatures, and the twenty-two others, shall agree in its construction, what have we sworn to, when we have sworn to maintain it? I was forcibly struck, Sir, with one reflection, as the gentleman went on in his speech. He quoted Mr. Madison's resolutions, to prove that a State may interfere, in a case of deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise of a power not granted. The honorable member supposes the tariff law to be such an exercise of power; and that

The vexed
question of
the tariff.

consequently a case has arisen in which the State may, if it see fit, interfere by its own law. Now, it so happens, nevertheless, that Mr. Madison deems this same tariff law quite constitutional. Instead of a clear and palpable violation, it is, in his judgment, no violation at all. So that, while they use his authority for a hypothetical case, they reject it in the very case before them. All this, Sir, shows the inherent futility, I had almost used a stronger word, of conceding this power of interference to the State, and then attempting to secure it from abuse by imposing qualifications of which the States themselves are to judge. One of two things is true: either the laws of the Union are beyond the discretion and beyond the control of the States; or else we have no constitution of general government, and are thrust back again to the days of the Confederation.

The laws of
the Union
beyond the
control of
the States.

I must now beg to ask, Sir, Whence is this supposed right of the States derived? Where do they find the power to interfere with the laws of the Union? Sir, the opinion which the honorable gentleman maintains is a notion founded in a total misapprehension, in my judgment, of the origin of this government, and of the foundation on which it stands. I hold it to be a popular government, erected by the people; those who administer it responsible to the people; and itself capable of being amended and modified, just as the people may choose it should be. It is as popular, just as truly emanating from the people, as the State governments. It is created for one purpose; the State governments for another. It has its own powers; they have theirs. There is no more authority with them to arrest the operation of a law of Congress, than with Congress to

arrest the operation of their laws. We are here to administer a Constitution emanating immediately from the people, and trusted by them to our administration. It is not the creature of the State governments. It is of no moment to the argument, that certain acts of the State legislatures are necessary to fill our seats in this body. That is not one of their original State powers, a part of the sovereignty of the State. It is a duty which the people, by the Constitution itself, have imposed on the State legislatures; and which they might have left to be performed elsewhere, if they had seen fit. So they have left the choice of President with electors; but all this does not affect the proposition that this whole government, President, Senate, and House of Representatives, is a popular government. It leaves it still all its popular character. The governor of a State (in some of the States) is chosen, not directly by the people, but by those who are chosen by the people, for the purpose of performing, among other duties, that of electing a governor. Is the government of the State, on that account, not a popular government? This government, Sir, is the independent offspring of the popular will. It is not the creature of State legislatures; nay, more, if the whole truth must be told, the people brought it into existence, established it, and have hitherto supported it, for the very purpose, amongst others, of imposing certain salutary restraints on State sovereignties. The States cannot now make war; they cannot contract alliances; they cannot make, each for itself, separate regulations of commerce; they cannot lay imposts; they cannot coin money. If this Constitution, Sir, be the creature of State legislatures, it must be admitted that it has obtained a strange control over the volitions of its creators.

The people, then, Sir, erected this government. They gave it a Constitution, and in that Constitution

**The people
erected the
government.**

they have enumerated the powers which they bestow on it. They have made it a limited government. They have defined its authority.

They have restrained it to the exercise of such powers as are granted; and all others, they declare, are reserved

**A constitution with
enumerated
powers.**

to the States or the people. But, Sir, they have not stopped here. If they had, they would have accomplished but half their work.

No definition can be so clear as to avoid possibility of doubt; no limitation so precise as to exclude all uncertainty. Who, then, shall construe this grant of the people? Who shall interpret their will, where it may be supposed they have left it doubtful? With whom do they repose this ultimate right of deciding on the powers of the government? Sir, they have settled all this in the fullest manner. They have left it with the

**The main
design of
the Constitution to
free the
government
from State
agency.**

government itself, in its appropriate branches. Sir, the very chief end, the main design, for which the whole Constitution was framed and adopted, was to establish a government that should not be obliged to act through State agency, or depend on State opinion

and State discretion. The people had had quite enough of that kind of government under the Confederation. Under that system, the legal action, the

**The failure
of the Confederation
the cause
of the Constitution.**

application of law to individuals, belonged exclusively to the States. Congress could only recommend; their acts were not of binding force till the States had adopted and sanctioned them. Are we in that condition still? Are we yet at the mercy of State discretion and State construction? Sir, if we are, then vain

will be our attempt to maintain the Constitution under which we sit.

But, Sir, the people have wisely provided, in the Constitution itself, a proper, suitable mode and tribunal for settling questions of constitutional law. There are in the Constitution grants of powers to Congress, and restrictions on these powers. There are, also, prohibitions on the States. Some authority must, therefore, necessarily exist, having the ultimate jurisdiction to fix and ascertain the interpretation of these grants, restrictions, and prohibitions. The Constitution has itself pointed out, ordained, and established that authority. How has it accomplished this great and essential end? By declaring, Sir, that "*the Constitution, and the laws of the United States, made in pursuance thereof, shall be the supreme law of the land, any thing in the constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.*"

This, Sir, was the first great step. By this the supremacy of the Constitution and laws of the United States is declared. The people so will it. No State law is to be valid which comes in conflict with the Constitution, or any law of the United States passed in pursuance of it. But who shall decide this question of interference? To whom lies the last appeal? This, Sir, the Constitution itself decides also, by declaring, "*that the judicial power shall extend to all cases arising under the Constitution and laws of the United States.*" These two provisions cover the whole ground. They are, in truth, the keystone of the arch! With these it is a government; without them it is a confederation. In pursuance of these clear and express provisions, Congress established, at its very first session, in the judicial act, a mode for carrying them into full effect, and for bringing all questions of constitutional

The
supremacy
of the Con-
stitution.

power to the final decision of the Supreme Court. It then, Sir, became a government. It then had the means of self-protection; and but for this, it would, in all probability, have been now among things which are past. Having constituted the government, and declared its powers, the people have further said, that, since somebody must decide on the extent of these powers, the government shall itself decide; subject, always, like other popular governments, to its responsibility to the people. And now, Sir, I repeat, how it is that a State legislature acquires any power to interfere? Who, or what, gives them the right to say to the people, "We, who are your agents and servants for one purpose, will undertake to decide that your other agents and servants, appointed by you for another purpose, have transcended the authority you gave them!" The reply would be, I think, not impertinent, "Who made you a judge over another's servants? To their own masters they stand or fall."

Sir, I deny this power of State legislatures altogether. It cannot stand the test of examination. Gentlemen may say that in an extreme case a State government might protect the people from intolerable oppression. Sir, in such a case the people might protect themselves without the aid of the State governments. Such a case warrants revolution. It must make, when it comes, a law for itself. A nullifying act of a State legislature cannot alter the case, nor make resistance any more lawful. In maintaining these sentiments, Sir, I am but asserting the rights of the people. I state what they have declared, and insist on their right to declare it. They have chosen to repose this power in

The final
decision of
the Supreme
Court.

Revolution
a law to
itself.

The people
have re-
posed power
in the gen-
eral govern-
ment.

the general government, and I think it my duty to support it, like other constitutional powers.

For myself, Sir, I do not admit the competency of South Carolina, or any other State, to prescribe my constitutional duty; or to settle, between me and the people, the validity of laws of Congress for which I have voted. I decline her umpirage. I have not sworn to support the Constitution according to her construction of its clauses. I have not stipulated, by my oath of office or otherwise, to come under any responsibility, except to the people, and those whom they have appointed to pass upon the question, whether laws, supported by my votes, conform to the Constitution of the country. And, Sir, if we look to the general nature of the case, could anything have been more preposterous than to make a government for the whole Union, and yet leave its powers subject, not to one interpretation, but to thirteen or twenty-four interpretations? Instead of one tribunal, established by all, responsible to all, with power to decide for all, shall constitutional questions be left to four-and-twenty popular bodies, each at liberty to decide for itself, and none bound to respect the decisions of others, — and each at liberty, too, to give a new construction on every new election of its own members? Would anything, with such a principle in it, or rather with such a destitution of all principle, be fit to be called a government? No, Sir. It should not be denominated a Constitution. It should be called, rather, a collection of topics for everlasting controversy; heads of debate for a disputatious people. It would not be a government. It would not be adequate to any practical good, or fit for any country to live under.

To avoid all possibility of being misunderstood, allow me to repeat again, in the fullest manner, that I claim

no powers for the government by forced or unfair construction. I admit that it is a government of strictly limited powers; of enumerated, specified, and particularized powers; and that whatsoever is not granted, is withheld. But notwithstanding all this, and however the grant of powers may be expressed, its limit and extent may yet, in some cases, admit of doubt; and the general government would be good for nothing, it would be incapable of long existing, if some mode had not been provided in which those doubts, as they should arise, might be peaceably, but authoritatively, solved.

And now, Mr. President, let me run the honorable gentleman's doctrine a little into its practical application. Let us look at his probable *modus operandi*. If a thing can be done, an ingenious man can tell how it is to be done, and I wish to be informed how this State interference is to be put in practice, without violence, bloodshed, and rebellion.

We will take the existing case of the tariff law. South Carolina is said to have made up her opinion upon it. If we do not repeal it, (as we probably shall not,) she will then apply to the case the remedy of her doctrine. She will, we must suppose, pass a law of her legislature, declaring the several acts of Congress usually called the tariff laws null and void, so far as they respect South Carolina, or the citizens thereof. So far, all is a paper transaction, and easy enough. But the collector at Charleston is collecting the duties imposed by these tariff laws. He, therefore, must be stopped. The collector will seize the goods if the tariff duties are not paid. The State authorities will undertake their rescue, the marshal, with his posse, will come to the collector's aid, and here the contest begins. The militia of the

State will be called out to sustain the Nullifying Act. They will march, Sir, under a very gallant leader; for I believe the honorable member himself commands the militia of that part of the State. He will raise the Nullifying Act on his standard, and spread it out as his banner! It will have a preamble, setting forth that the tariff laws are palpable, deliberate, and dangerous violations of the Constitution! He will proceed, with this banner flying, to the custom-house in Charleston,

“ All the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds.”

Arrived at the custom-house, he will tell the collector that he must collect no more duties under any of the tariff laws. This he will be somewhat puzzled to say, by the way, with a grave countenance, considering what hand South Carolina herself had in that of 1816. But, Sir, the collector would not probably desist, at his bidding. He would show him the law of Congress, the treasury instruction, and his own oath of office. He would say, he should perform his duty, come what come might.

Here would ensue a pause; for they say that a certain stillness precedes the tempest. The trumpeter would hold his breath awhile, and before all this military array should fall on the custom-house, collector, clerks, and all, it is very probable some of those composing it would request of their gallant commander-in-chief to be informed a little upon the point of law; for they have, doubtless, a just respect for his opinions as a lawyer, as well as for his bravery as a soldier. They know he has read Blackstone¹ and the Constitution, as well as

¹ Sir William Blackstone (1723-1780), author of the famous “*Commentaries on the Laws of England*” (1765-1769).

Turenne¹ and Vauban.² They would ask him, therefore, something concerning their rights in this matter. They would inquire whether it was not somewhat dangerous to resist a law of the United States. What would be the nature of their offence, they would wish to learn, if they, by military force and array, resisted the execution in Carolina of a law of the United States, and it should turn out, after all, that the law *was constitutional*? He would answer, of course, Treason. No lawyer could give any other answer. John Fries,³ he would tell them, had learned that, some years ago. How, then, they would ask, do you propose to defend us? We are not afraid of bullets, but treason has a way of taking people off that we do not much relish. How do you propose to defend us? "Look at my floating banner," he would reply; "see there the *nullifying law*!" Is it your opinion, gallant commander, they would then say, that, if we should be indicted for treason, that same floating banner of yours would make a good plea in bar? "South Carolina is a sovereign State," he would reply. That is true; but would the judge admit our plea? "These tariff laws," he would repeat, "are unconstitu-

¹ Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, Vicomte de Turenne (1611-1675) an eminent French general, who left memoirs of his campaigns from 1643 to 1658.

² See note on page xciv.

³ John Fries (1764?-1825) was the leader of seven hundred men who forcibly resisted the levying of the "house or window" tax in Northampton, Bucks, and Montgomery counties, Pennsylvania, in 1798-1799. These men liberated prisoners and "arrested" the assessors themselves; and Fries, when marching toward Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, resisted a United States marshal. He was tried for treason in 1799, found guilty, given a new trial in 1800, again found guilty, and sentenced to be hanged; but President John Adams, against the advice of all his cabinet, pardoned him and gave a general amnesty to the rioters. Fries became a well-to-do merchant in Philadelphia.

tional, palpably, deliberately, dangerously." That may all be so; but if the tribunal should not happen to be of that opinion, shall we swing for it? We are ready to die for our country, but it is rather an awkward business, this dying without touching the ground! After all, that is a sort of hemp tax worse than any part of the tariff.

Mr. President, the honorable gentleman would be in a dilemma, like that of another great general. He would have a knot before him which he could not untie. He must cut it with his sword. He must say to his followers, "Defend yourselves with your bayonets;" and this is war, — civil war.

Direct collision, therefore, between force and force, is the unavoidable result of that remedy for the revision of unconstitutional laws which the gentleman contends for. It must happen in the very first case to which it is applied. Is not this the plain result? To resist by force the execution of a law, generally, is treason. Can the courts of the United States take notice of the indulgence of a State to commit treason? The common saying that a State cannot commit treason herself, is nothing to the purpose. Can she authorize others to do it? If John Fries had produced an act of Pennsylvania, annulling the law of Congress, would it have helped his case? Talk about it as we will, these doctrines go the length of revolution. They are incompatible with any peaceable administration of the government. They lead directly to disunion and civil commotion; and therefore it is, that at their commencement, when they are first found to be maintained by respectable men, and in a tangible form, I enter my public protest against them all.

Nullification
leads to
disunion.

The honorable gentleman argues, that, if this government be the sole judge of the extent of its own powers,

whether that right of judging be in Congress or the Supreme Court, it equally subverts State sovereignty. This the gentleman sees, or thinks he sees, although he cannot perceive how the right of judging in this matter, if left to the exercise of State legislatures, has any tendency to subvert the government of the Union. The gentleman's opinion may be that the right *ought not* to have been lodged with the general government; he may like better such a constitution as we should have under the right of State interference; but I ask him to meet me on the plain matter of fact. I ask him to meet me on the Constitution itself. I ask him if the power is not found there, clearly and visibly found there?

But, Sir, what is this danger, and what are the grounds of it? Let it be remembered that the Constitution of the United States is not unalterable. It is to continue in its present form no longer than the people who established it shall choose to continue it. If they shall become convinced that they have made an injudicious or inexpedient partition and distribution of power between the State governments and the general government, they can alter that distribution at will.

The Constitution alterable by the people, not by the States.

But, Sir, although there are fears, there are hopes also. The people have preserved this, their own chosen Constitution, for forty years, and have seen their happiness, prosperity, and renown grow with its growth, and strengthen with its strength. They are now, generally, strongly attached to it. Overthrown by direct assault it cannot be; evaded, undermined, *nullified*, it will not be, if we and those who shall succeed us here, as agents and representatives of the people, shall conscientiously and vigilantly discharge the two great branches of

our public trust, faithfully to preserve, and wisely to administer it.

Mr. President, I have thus stated the reasons of my dissent to the doctrines which have been advanced and maintained. I am conscious of having detained you and the Senate much too long. I was drawn into the debate with no previous deliberation, such as is suited to the discussion of so grave and important a subject. But it is a subject of which my heart is full, and I have not been willing to suppress the utterance of its spontaneous sentiments. I cannot, even now, persuade myself to relinquish it, without expressing once more my deep conviction, that, since it respects nothing less than the Union of the States, it is of most vital and essential importance to the public happiness. I profess, Sir, in my career hitherto, to have kept steadily in view the prosperity and honor of the whole country, and the preservation of our Federal Union. It is to that Union we owe our safety at home, and our consideration and dignity abroad. It is to that Union that we are chiefly indebted for whatever makes us most proud of our country. That Union we reached only by the discipline of our virtues in the severe school of adversity. It had its origin in the necessities of disordered finance, prostrate commerce, and ruined credit. Under its benign influences, these great interests immediately awoke, as from the dead, and sprang forth with newness of life. Every year of its duration has teemed with fresh proofs of its utility and its blessings; and although our territory has stretched out wider and wider, and our population spread farther and farther, they have not outrun its protection or its benefits. It has been to us all a copious fountain of national, social, and personal happiness.

The preservation of the Union.

I have not allowed myself, Sir, to look beyond the Union, to see what might lie hidden in the dark recess behind. I have not coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty when the bonds that unite us together shall be broken asunder. I have not accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of disunion, to see whether, with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below; nor could I regard him as a safe counsellor in the affairs of this government, whose thoughts should be mainly bent on considering, not how the Union may be best preserved, but how tolerable might be the condition of the people when it should be broken up and destroyed. While the Union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that, in my day, at least, that curtain may not rise! God grant that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind! When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dis-severed, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured, bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as "What is all this worth?" nor those other words of delusion and folly, "Liberty first and Union afterwards"; but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over

Webster's
final
prayer.

the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart, — Liberty *and* Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!¹

¹ Interesting examples of Webster's revision of important passages in this speech may be found by comparing the present standard text with the original versions as preserved in the Boston Public Library. The eulogium of Massachusetts, beginning "Mr. President, I shall enter on no encomium" and ending with "the very spot of its origin," was spoken thus:

"Sir, I shall be led on this occasion into no eulogium on Massachusetts. I shall paint no portraiture of her merits, original, ancient or modern. Yet, Sir, I cannot but remember that Boston *was* the cradle of liberty, that in Massachusetts (the parent of this accursed policy so eternally narrow to the West), etc., etc., etc. I cannot forget that Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill *are* in Massachusetts, and that in men and means and money she *did* contribute more than any other State to carry on the Revolutionary war. There was not a State in the Union whose soil was not wetted with Massachusetts blood in the Revolutionary war, and it is to be remembered that of the army to which Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown a majority consisted of New England troops. It is painful to me to recur to these recollections even for the purpose of self-defence, and even to that end, Sir, I will not extol the intelligence, the character and the virtue of the people of New England. I leave the theme to itself, here and everywhere, now and forever."

The first form of the famous concluding passage was as follows:

"When my eyes shall be turned for the last time on the meridian sun, I hope I may see him shining bright upon my united, free, and happy country. I hope I shall not live to see his beams falling upon the dispersed fragments of the structure of this once glorious Union. I hope I may not see the flag of my country with its stars separated or obliterated; torn by commotions, smoking with the blood of civil war. I hope I may not see the standard raised of separate State rights, star against star, and stripe against stripe; but that the flag of the Union may keep its stars and its stripes corded and bound together in indissoluble ties. I hope I shall not see written as its motto, '*First* liberty, and *then* Union.' I hope I shall see no such delusive and deluded motto on the flag of that country. I hope to see, spread all over it, blazoned in letters of light and proudly floating over land and sea, that other sentiment, dear to my heart, '*Union and Liberty, now and forever, one and inseparable.*'"

APPENDIX B

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES¹

WE, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

ARTICLE I

SECTION I

All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

¹ The Convention which framed the Constitution sat in Philadelphia, May–September, 1787. Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey ratified it the same year; Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, and New York in 1788; North Carolina, Nov. 21, 1789, and Rhode Island, May 29, 1790; the two last named, after the operations of the new government had been begun by the inauguration of Washington, April 30, 1789. It is an interesting fact that Webster's native State was the ninth to ratify, thereby making the Constitution binding, according to the provision in Article VII.

Amendments I–X were proposed in 1789, and declared adopted in 1791. Amendment XI was proposed in 1794, and declared adopted in 1798. Amendment XII was proposed in 1803, and declared adopted in 1804. Amendment XIII was proposed and adopted in 1865. Amendment XIV was proposed in 1866, and adopted in 1868. Amendment XV was proposed in 1869, and adopted in 1870.

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SECTION II

The House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year by the people of the several States, and the electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislature.

No person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained the age of twenty-five years, and been seven years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons. The actual enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent term of ten years, in such manner as they shall by law direct. The number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty thousand, but each State shall have at least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of *New Hampshire* shall be entitled to choose three, *Massachusetts* eight, *Rhode Island and Providence Plantations* one, *Connecticut* five, *New York* six, *New Jersey* four, *Pennsylvania* eight, *Delaware* one, *Maryland* six, *Virginia* ten, *North Carolina* five, *South Carolina* five, and *Georgia* three.

When vacancies happen in the representation from any State, the executive authority thereof shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall choose their Speaker and other officers, and shall have the sole power of impeachment.

SECTION III

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the legislature thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in consequence of the first election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three classes. The seats of the Senators of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the second year, of the second class, at the expiration of the fourth year, and of the third class, at the expiration of the sixth year, so that one-third may be chosen every second year; and if vacancies happen by resignation or otherwise during the recess of the legislature of any State, the executive thereof may make temporary appointments until the next meeting of the legislature, which shall then fill such vacancies.

No person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the age of thirty years, and been nine years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.

The Vice-President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no vote, unless they be equally divided.

The Senate shall choose their other officers, and also a President *pro tempore* in the absence of the Vice-President, or when he shall exercise the office of President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole power to try all impeachments. When sitting for that purpose, they shall be on oath or affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside: and no person shall be convicted without the concurrence of two-thirds of the members present.

Judgment in cases of impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust, or profit under

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the United States ; but the party convicted shall, nevertheless, be liable and subject to indictment, trial, judgment, and punishment, according to law.

SECTION IV

The times, places, and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives shall be prescribed in each State by the legislature thereof ; but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations, except as to the places of choosing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

SECTION V

Each house shall be the judge of the elections, returns, and qualifications of its own members, and a majority of each shall constitute a quorum to do business ; but a smaller number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the attendance of absent members, in such manner, and under such penalties, as each house may provide.

Each house may determine the rules of its proceedings, punish its members for disorderly behavior, and with the concurrence of two-thirds, expel a member.

Each house shall keep a journal of its proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such parts as may in their judgment require secrecy, and the yeas and nays of the members of either house on any question shall, at the desire of one-fifth of those present, be entered on the journal.

Neither house, during the session of Congress, shall, without the consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other place than that in which the two houses shall be sitting.

SECTION VI

The Senators and Representatives shall receive a compensation for their services, to be ascertained by law and paid out of the Treasury of the United States. They shall, in all cases except treason, felony, and breach of the peace, be privileged from arrest during their attendance at the session of their respective houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any speech or debate in either house they shall not be questioned in any other place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil office under the authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the emoluments whereof shall have been increased during such time; and no person holding any office under the United States shall be a member of either house during his continuance in office.

SECTION VII

All bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with amendments as on other bills.

Every bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate shall, before it become a law, be presented to the President of the United States; if he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his objections, to that house in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the objections at large on their journal and proceed to reconsider it. If after such reconsideration two-thirds of that house shall agree to pass the bill, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other house, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two-thirds of that house it shall become a law. But in all such cases the votes of both houses shall be determined by yeas and nays, and the names of the persons voting for and against the bill shall be entered on the journal of each house

respectively. If any bill shall not be returned by the President within ten days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the same shall be a law, in like manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their adjournment prevent its return, in which case it shall not be a law.

Every order, resolution, or vote to which the concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States; and before the same shall take effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two-thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the rules and limitations prescribed in the case of a bill.

SECTION VIII

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defence and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts, and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate commerce with foreign nations and among the several States, and with the Indian tribes;

To establish an uniform rule of naturalization, and uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin, and fix the standard of weights and measures;

To provide for the punishment of counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States;

To establish post-offices and post-roads;

To promote the progress of science and useful arts by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries;

To constitute tribunals inferior to the Supreme Court;

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To define and punish piracies and felonies committed on the high seas and offences against the law of nations ;

To declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water ;

To raise and support armies, but no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than two years ;

To provide and maintain a navy ;

To make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces ;

To provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions ;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively the appointment of the officers, and the authority of training the militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress ;

To exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever over such district (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular States and the acceptance of Congress, become the seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like authority over all places purchased by the consent of the legislature of the State in which the same shall be, for the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dockyards, and other needful buildings ; and

To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

SECTION IX

The migration or importation of such persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a tax or duty may be

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imposed on such importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each person.

The privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in cases of rebellion or invasion the public safety may require it.

No bill of attainder or ex post facto law shall be passed.

No capitation or other direct tax shall be laid, unless in proportion to the census or enumeration hereinbefore directed to be taken.

No tax or duty shall be laid on articles exported from any State.

No preference shall be given by any regulation of commerce or revenue to the ports of one State over those of another; nor shall vessels bound to or from one State be obliged to enter, clear, or pay duties in another.

No money shall be drawn from the Treasury but in consequence of appropriations made by law; and a regular statement and account of the receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be published from time to time.

No title of nobility shall be granted by the United States; and no person holding any office of profit or trust under them shall, without the consent of the Congress, accept of any present, emolument, office, or title, of any kind whatever, from any king, prince, or foreign State.

SECTION X

No State shall enter into any treaty, alliance, or confederation; grant letters of marque and reprisal; coin money; emit bills of credit; make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts; pass any bill of attainder, ex post facto law, or law impairing the obligation of contracts, or grant any title of nobility.

No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any imposts or duties on imports or exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing its inspection laws; and the net produce of all duties and imposts, laid by any

State in imports or exports, shall be for the use of the Treasury of the United States; and all such laws shall be subject to the revision and control of the Congress.

No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any duty of tonnage, keep troops or ships of war in time of peace, enter into any agreement or compact with another State or with a foreign power, or engage in war, unless actually invaded or in such imminent danger as will not admit of delay.

ARTICLE II

SECTION 1

The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, and together with the Vice-President, chosen for the same term, he shall as follows.

Each State shall appoint, in such manner as the legislature thereof may direct, a number of electors, equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress, but no Senator or Representative, or person holding an office of trust or profit under the United States, shall be appointed an elector.

The electors shall meet in their respective States and vote by ballot for two persons, of whom one at least shall not be an inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a list of all the persons voted for, and of the number of votes for each; which list they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates, and the votes shall then be counted. The person having the greatest number of votes shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed, and if there be more than one who have such majority, and have an equal number of votes, then

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the House of Representatives shall immediately choose by ballot one of them for President; and if no person have a majority, then from the five highest on the list the said House shall in like manner choose the President. But in choosing the President the votes shall be taken by States, the representation from each State having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the States, and a majority of all the States shall be necessary to a choice. In every case, after the choice of the President, the person having the greatest number of votes of the electors shall be the Vice-President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal votes, the Senate shall choose from them by ballot the Vice-President.

The Congress may determine the time of choosing the electors and the day on which they shall give their votes, which day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No person except a natural-born citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen years a resident within the United States.

In case of the removal of the President from office, or of his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the said office, the same shall devolve on the Vice-President, and the Congress may by law provide for the case of removal, death, resignation, or inability, both of the President and Vice-President, declaring what officer shall then act as President, and such officer shall act accordingly until the disability be removed or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated times, receive for his services a compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the period for which he may have

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been elected, and he shall not receive within that period any other emolument from the United States or any of them.

Before he enter on the execution of his office he shall take the following oath or affirmation :

“I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.”

SECTION II

The President shall be Commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several States when called into the actual service of the United States ; he may require the opinion, in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices, and he shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offences against the United States, except in cases of impeachment.

He shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur ; and he shall nominate, and, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other officers of the United States, whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by law ; but the Congress may by law vest the appointment of such inferior officers as they think proper, in the President alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of departments.

The President shall have power to fill up all vacancies that may happen during the recess of the Senate, by granting commissions which shall expire at the end of their next session.

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SECTION III

He shall from time to time give to the Congress information of the state of the Union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary occasions, convene both houses, or either of them, and in case of disagreement between them with respect to the time of adjournment, he may adjourn them to such time as he shall think proper; he shall receive ambassadors and other public ministers; he shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed, and shall commission all the officers of the United States.

SECTION IV

The President, Vice-President, and all civil officers of the United States shall be removed from office on impeachment for and conviction of treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors.

ARTICLE III

SECTION I

The judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The judges, both of the supreme and inferior courts, shall hold their offices during good behavior, and shall, at stated times, receive for their services a compensation which shall not be diminished during their continuance in office.

SECTION II

The judicial power shall extend to all cases, in law and equity, arising under this Constitution, the laws of the United States, and treaties made, or which shall be made, under their authority; to all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers, and consuls; to all cases of admiralty and maritime jurisdiction; to controversies to which

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the United States shall be a party ; to controversies between two or more States ; between a State and citizens of another State ; between citizens of different States ; between citizens of the same State claiming lands under grants of different States ; and between a State, or the citizens thereof, and foreign States, citizens, or subjects.

In all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and those in which a State shall be a party, the Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction. In all the other cases before mentioned the Supreme Court shall have appellate jurisdiction, both as to law and fact, with such exceptions and under such regulations as the Congress shall make.

The trial of all crimes, except in cases of impeachment, shall be by jury ; and such trial shall be held in the State where the said crimes shall have been committed ; but when not committed within any State, the trial shall be at such place or places as the Congress may by law have directed.

SECTION III

Treason against the United States shall consist only in levying war against them, or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort. No person shall be convicted of treason unless on the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act, or on confession in open court.

The Congress shall have power to declare the punishment of treason, but no attainder of treason shall work corruption of blood or forfeiture except during the life of the person attainted.

ARTICLE IV

SECTION I

Full faith and credit shall be given in each State to the public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may by general laws prescribe

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the manner in which such acts, records, and proceedings shall be proved, and the effect thereof.

SECTION II

The citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States.

A person charged in any State with treason, felony, or other crime, who shall flee from justice, and be found in another State, shall, on demand of the executive authority of the State from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the State having jurisdiction of the crime.

No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.

SECTION III

New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union ; but no new State shall be formed or erected within the jurisdiction of any other State ; nor any State be formed by the junction of two or more States or parts of States, without the consent of the legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.

The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States ; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States or of any particular State.

SECTION IV

The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion, and on application of the legislature, or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened), against domestic violence.

ARTICLE V

The Congress, whenever two-thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two-thirds of the several States, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which in either case shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three-fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress, provided that no amendments which may be made prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses in the ninth section of the first article; and that no State, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate.

ARTICLE VI

All debts contracted and engagements entered into, before the adoption of this Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this Constitution as under the confederation.

This Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof, and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the members of the several State legislatures, and all executive and judicial officers both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by oath or affirmation to support this Constitution; but no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.

ARTICLE VII

The ratification of the conventions of nine States shall be sufficient for the establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the same.

Done in convention by the unanimous consent of the States present, the seventeenth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven, and of the independence of the United States of America the twelfth. In witness whereof, we have hereunto subscribed our names.

George Washington, President, and Deputy from VIRGINIA.

NEW HAMPSHIRE — John Langdon, Nicholas Gilman.

MASSACHUSETTS — Nathaniel Gorham, Rufus King.

CONNECTICUT — William Samuel Johnson, Roger Sherman.

NEW YORK — Alexander Hamilton.

NEW JERSEY — William Livingston, David Brearly, William Patterson, Jonathan Dayton.

PENNSYLVANIA — Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Mifflin, Robert Morris, George Clymer, Thomas Fitzsimmons, Jared Ingersoll, James Wilson, Gouverneur Morris.

DELAWARE — George Read, Gunning Bedford, Jr., John Dickinson, Richard Bassett, Jacob Broom.

MARYLAND — James McHenry, Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, Daniel Carroll.

VIRGINIA — John Blair, James Madison, Jr.

NORTH CAROLINA — William Blount, Richard Dobbs Spaight, Hugh Williamson.

SOUTH CAROLINA — John Rutledge, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Charles Pinckney, Pierce Butler.

GEORGIA — William Few, Abraham Baldwin.

Attest: William Jackson, *Secretary*.

AMENDMENTS

ARTICLE I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof ; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press ; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

ARTICLE II

A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

ARTICLE III

No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

ARTICLE IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the person or things to be seized.

ARTICLE V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger ; nor shall any person be

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subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.

ARTICLE VI

In all criminal prosecution the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defence.

ARTICLE VII

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise re-examined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

ARTICLE VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

ARTICLE IX

The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

ARTICLE X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively or to the people.

ARTICLE XI

The judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by citizens of another State, or by citizens or subjects of any foreign State.

ARTICLE XII

The electors shall meet in their respective States and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same State with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each; which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted. The person having the greatest number of votes for President shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President the votes shall be taken by States, the representation from each State having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the States, and a majority of all the States shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them,

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before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President.

The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

ARTICLE XIII

SECTION 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

SECTION 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

ARTICLE XIV

SECTION 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

SECTION 2. Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers,

counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a State, or the members of the legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

SECTION 3. No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may, by a vote of two-thirds of each house, remove such disability.

SECTION 4. The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations, and claims shall be held illegal and void.

SECTION 5. The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

ARTICLE XV

SECTION 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

SECTION 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

THE FORMATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE UNION

A SPEECH DELIVERED AT A PUBLIC DINNER GIVEN BY
CITIZENS OF NEW YORK IN HONOR OF MR. WEBSTER,
MARCH 16, 1831

It would be strange, indeed, if the members of this vast commercial community should not be first and foremost to rally for the Constitution, whenever opinions and doctrines are advanced hostile to its principles. Where sooner than here, where louder than here, may we expect a patriotic voice to be raised, when the union of the States is threatened? In this great emporium, at this central point of the united commerce of the United States, of all places, we may expect the warmest, the most determined and universal feeling of attachment to the national government.

Gentlemen, no one can estimate more highly than I do the natural advantages of your city. No one entertains a higher opinion than myself, also, of that spirit of wise and liberal policy which has actuated the government of your own great State in the accomplishment of high objects, important to the growth and prosperity both of the State and the city. But all these local advantages, and all this enlightened State policy, could never have made your city what it now is, without the aid and protection of a general government, extending over all the States, and establishing for all a common

and uniform system of commercial regulation. Without national character, without public credit, without systematic finance, without uniformity of commercial laws, all other advantages possessed by this city would have decayed and perished, like unripe fruit.

A general government was, for years before it was instituted, the great object of desire to the inhabitants of this city. New York, at a very early day, was conscious of her local advantages for commerce; she saw her destiny, and was eager to embrace it; but nothing else than a general government could make free her path before her, and set her forward on her brilliant career. She early saw all this, and to the accomplishment of this great and indispensable object she bent every faculty, and exerted every effort. She was not mistaken. She formed no false judgment. At the

moment of the adoption of the Constitution, New York was the capital of one State, and contained thirty two or three thousand people. It now contains more than two hundred thousand people, and is justly regarded as the commercial capital, not only of all the United States, but of the whole continent also, from the pole to the South Sea. Every page of her history, for the last forty years, bears high and irresistible testimony to the benefits and blessings of the general government. Her astonishing growth is referred to, and quoted, all the world over, as one of the most striking proofs of the effects of our Federal Union. To suppose her now to be easy and indifferent, when notions are advanced tending to its dissolution, would be to suppose her equally forgetful of the past and blind to the present, alike ignorant of her own history and her own interest, metamorphosed, from all that she has been, into a being

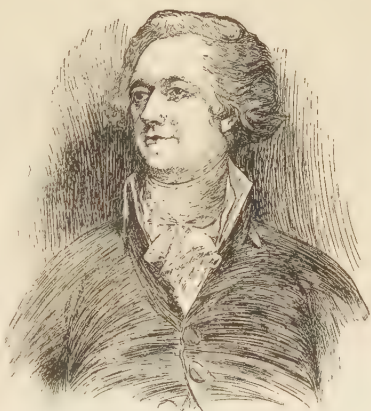
The city of
New York
at the close
of the
eighteenth
century.

tired of its prosperity, sick of its own growth and greatness, and infatuated for its own destruction. Every blow aimed at the union of the States strikes on the tenderest nerve of her interest and her happiness. To bring the Union into debate is to bring her own future prosperity into debate also. To speak of arresting the laws of the Union, of interposing State power in matters of commerce and revenue, of weakening the full and just authority of the general government, would be, in regard to this city, but another mode of speaking of commercial ruin, of abandoned wharves, of vacated houses, of diminished and dispersing population, of bankrupt merchants, of mechanics without employment, and laborers without bread. The growth of this city and the Constitution of the United States are coevals and contemporaries. They began together, they have flourished together, and if rashness and folly destroy one, the other will follow it to the tomb.

I should do violence to my own feelings, Gentlemen, I think I should offend yours, if I omitted respectful
 Alexander mention of distinguished names yet fresh in
 Hamilton. your recollections. How can I stand here, to speak of the Constitution of the United States, of the wisdom of its provisions, of the difficulties attending its adoption, of the evils from which it rescued the country, and of the prosperity and power to which it has raised it, and yet pay no tribute to those who were highly instrumental in accomplishing the work? While we are here to rejoice that it yet stands firm and strong, while we congratulate one another that we live under its benign influence, and cherish hopes of its long duration, we cannot forget who they were that, in the day of our national infancy, in the times of despondency

and despair, mainly assisted to work out our deliverance. I should feel that I was unfaithful to the strong recollections which the occasion presses upon us, that I was not true to gratitude, not true to patriotism, not true to the living or the dead, not true to your feelings or my own, if I should forbear to make mention of Alexander Hamilton.

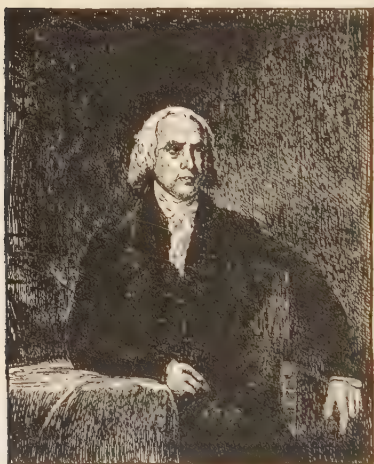
Coming from the military service of the country yet a youth, but with knowledge and maturity, even in civil affairs, far beyond his years, he made this city the place of his adoption; and he gave the whole powers of his mind to the contemplation of the weak and



Alexander Hamilton.

distracted condition of the country. Daily increasing in acquaintance and confidence with the people of New York, he saw, what they also saw, the absolute necessity of some closer bond of union for the States. This was the great object of desire. He never appears to have lost sight of it, but was found in the lead whenever anything was to be attempted for its accomplishment. One experiment after another, as is well known, was tried, and all failed. The States were urgently called on to confer such further powers on the old Congress as would enable it to redeem the public faith, or to adopt, themselves, some general and common principle of commercial regulation. But the States

had not agreed, and were not likely to agree. In this posture of affairs, so full of public difficulty and public distress, commissioners from five or six of the States met, on the request of Virginia, at Annapolis, in September, 1786. The precise object of their appointment was to take into consideration the trade of the United States; to examine the relative situations and trade of



James Madison.

the several States; and to consider how far a uniform system of commercial regulations was necessary to their common interest and permanent harmony. Mr. Hamilton was one of these commissioners; and I have understood, though I cannot assert the fact, that their report was drawn by him. His associate from this State was the venerable Judge Benson, who has lived long, and still lives, to see the happy

results of the counsels which originated in this meeting. Of its members, he and Mr. Madison are, I believe, now the only survivors. These commissioners recommended, what took place the next year, a general Convention of all the States, to take into serious deliberation the condition of the country, and devise such provisions as should render the Constitution of the Federal government adequate to the exigencies of the Union. I need not remind you that of this Con-

**James
Madison.**

vention Mr. Hamilton was an active and efficient member. The Constitution was framed and submitted to the country. And then another great work was to be undertaken. The Constitution would naturally find, and did find, enemies and opposers. Objections to it were numerous, and powerful, and spirited. They were to be answered; and they were effectually answered. The writers of the numbers of the *Federalist*,¹ Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Madison, and Mr. Jay, so greatly distinguished themselves in their discussions of the Constitution, that those numbers are generally received as important commentaries on the text, and accurate expositions, in general, of its objects and purposes. Those papers were all written and published in this city. Mr. Hamilton was elected one of the distinguished delegation from the city to the State Convention at Poughkeepsie, called to ratify the new Constitution. Its debates are published. Mr. Hamilton appears to have exerted, on this occasion, to the utmost, every power and faculty of his mind.

The whole question was likely to depend on the decision of New York. He felt the full importance of the crisis; and the reports of his speeches, imperfect as they probably are, are yet lasting monuments to his genius and patriotism. He saw at last his hopes fulfilled; he saw the Constitution adopted, and the government under it established and organized. The discerning eye of Washington immediately called him to that post which was far the most important in the

¹ The series of papers by the three writers named was designed to promote the ratification of the United States Constitution by the State of New York. The essays were all signed "Publius," and appeared in book form in 1788, most of them having been printed previously in newspapers.

administration of the new system. He was made Secretary of the Treasury; and how he fulfilled the duties of such a place, at such a time, the whole country perceived with delight and the whole world saw with admiration. He smote the rock of the national resources, and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth. He touched the dead corpse of the Public Credit, and it sprung upon its feet.

**Hamilton's
career as
Secretary
of the
Treasury.**



John Jay.

The fabled birth of Minerva, from the brain of Jove, was hardly more sudden or more perfect than the financial system of the United States, as it burst forth from the conceptions of Alexander Hamilton.

Your recollections, Gentlemen, your respect, and your affections, all conspire to bring before you, at such a time as this, another great man, now too numbered

with the dead. I mean the pure, the disinterested, the patriotic John Jay. His character is a brilliant jewel in the sacred treasures of national reputation.

John Jay.

Leaving his profession at an early period, yet not before he had singularly distinguished himself in it, his whole life, from the commencement of the Revolution until his final retirement, was a life of public service. A member of the first Congress, he was the

author of that political paper which is generally acknowledged to stand first among the incomparable productions of that body;¹ productions which called forth that decisive strain of commendation from the great Lord Chatham, in which he pronounced them not inferior to the finest productions of the master states of the world. Mr. Jay had been abroad, and he had also been long intrusted with the difficult duties of our foreign correspondence at home. He had seen and felt, in the fullest measure and to the greatest possible extent, the difficulty of conducting our foreign affairs honorably and usefully, without a stronger and more perfect domestic union. Though not a member of the Convention which framed the Constitution, he was yet present while it was in session, and looked anxiously for its result. By the choice of this city, he had a seat in the State Convention, and took an active and zealous part for the adoption of the Constitution. On the organization of the new government, he was selected by Washington to be the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; and surely the high and most responsible duties of that station could not have been trusted to abler or safer hands. It is the duty of that tribunal, one of equal importance and delicacy, to decide constitutional questions, occasionally arising on State laws. The general learning and ability, and especially the prudence, the mildness, and the firmness of his character, eminently fitted Mr. Jay to be the head of such a court. When the spotless ermine of the judicial robe fell on John Jay, it touched nothing less spotless than itself.

These eminent men, Gentlemen, the contemporaries of some of you, known to most, and revered by all,

¹ "Address to the People of Great Britain."

were so conspicuous in the framing and adopting of the Constitution, and called so early to important stations under it, that a tribute, better, indeed, than I have given, or am able to give, seemed due to them from us, on this occasion.

There was yet another, of whom mention is to be made. In the Revolutionary history of the country, the



Robert R. Livingston.

name of Chancellor Livingston became early prominent. He was a member of that Congress which declared Independence; and a member, too, of the committee which drew and reported the immortal Declaration. At the period of the adoption of the Constitution, he was its firm friend and able advocate. He was a member of the State Convention, being one of that list

of distinguished and gifted men who represented this city in that body; and he threw the whole weight of his talents and influence into the doubtful scale of the Constitution.

Gentlemen, as connected with the Constitution, you have also local recollections which must bind it still closer to your attachment and affection. It commenced its being and its blessings here. It was in this city, in the midst of friends, anxious, hopeful, and devoted,

that the new government started in its course. To us, Gentlemen, who are younger, it has come down by tradition; but some around me are old enough to have witnessed, and did witness, the interesting scene of the first inauguration. They remember what voices of gratified patriotism, what shouts of enthusiastic hope, what acclamations rent the air, how many eyes were suffused with tears of joy, how cordially each man pressed the hand of him who was next to him, when, standing in the open air, in the centre of the city, in the view of assembled thousands, the first President of the United States was heard solemnly to pronounce the words of his official oath, repeating them from the lips of Chancellor Livingston. You then thought, Gentlemen, that the great work of the Revolution was accomplished. You then felt that you had a government; that the United States were then, indeed, united. Every benignant star seemed to shed its selectest influence on that auspicious hour. Here were heroes of the Revolution; here were sages of the Convention; here were minds, disciplined and schooled in all the various fortunes of the country, acting now in several relations, but all co-operating to the same great end, the successful administration of the new and untried Constitution. And he, — how shall I speak of him? — he was at the head, who was already first in war, who was already first in the hearts of his countrymen, and who was now shown also, by the unanimous suffrage of the country, to be first in peace.

Washington's inauguration as the first President of the United States.

Gentlemen, how gloriously have the hopes then indulged been fulfilled? Whose expectation was then so sanguine, I may almost ask, whose imagination then so extravagant, as to run forward, and contemplate as

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probable, the one-half of what has been accomplished in forty years? Who among you can go back to 1789, and see what this city, and this country, too, then were; and, beholding what they now are, can be ready to consent that the Constitution of the United States shall be weakened, — dishonored, — *nullified*?

The legislative history of the first two or three years of the government is full of instruction. It presents, in striking light, the evils intended to be remedied by the Constitution, and the provisions which were deemed essential to the remedy of those evils. It exhibits the country in the moment of its change from a weak and ill-defined confederacy of States, into a general, efficient, but still restrained and limited government. It shows the first working of our peculiar system, moved, as it then was, by master hands.

The early legislative history of the United States.

Gentlemen, for one, I confess I like to dwell on this part of our history. It is good for us to be here. It is good for us to study the situation of the country at this period, to survey its difficulties, to look at the conduct of its public men, to see how they struggled with obstacles, real and formidable, and how gloriously they brought the Union out of its state of depression and distress. Truly, Gentlemen, these founders and fathers of the Constitution were great men, and thoroughly furnished for every good work. All that reading and learning could do; all that talent and intelligence could do; and, what perhaps is still more, all that long experience in difficult and troubled times and a deep and intimate practical knowledge of the condition of the country could do, — conspired to fit them for the great business

The founders of the Constitution.

of forming a general, but limited government, embracing common objects, extending over all the States, and yet touching the power of the States no further than those common objects require. I confess I love to linger around these original fountains, and to drink deep of their waters. I love to imbibe, in as full measure as I may, the spirit of those who laid the foundations of the government, and so wisely and skillfully balanced and adjusted its bearings and proportions.

Gentlemen, what I have said of the benefits of the Constitution to your city might be said, with little change, in respect to every other part of the country. Its benefits are not exclusive. The great value of the Constitution. What has it left undone, which any government could do, for the whole country? In what condition has it placed us? Where do we now stand? Are we elevated, or degraded, by its operation? What is our condition under its influence, at the very moment when some talk of arresting its power and breaking its unity? Do we not feel ourselves on an eminence? Do we not challenge the respect of the whole world?

What has placed us thus high? What has given us this just pride? What else is it, but the unrestrained and free operation of that same Federal Constitution, which it has been proposed now to hamper, and manacle, and nullify? Who is there among us, that, should he find himself on any spot of the earth where human beings exist, and where the existence of other nations is known, would not be proud to say, I am an American? I am a countryman of Washington? I am a citizen of that republic, which, although it has suddenly sprung up, yet there are none on the globe who have

ears to hear, and have not heard of it; who have eyes to see, and have not read of it; who know anything, and yet do not know of its existence and its glory? And, Gentlemen, let me now reverse the picture. Let me ask, who there is among us, if he were to be found to-morrow in one of the civilized countries of Europe, and were there to learn that this goodly form of government had been overthrown, that the United States were no longer united, that a death-blow had been struck upon their bond of union, that they themselves had destroyed their chief good and their chief honor, — who is there whose heart would not sink within him? Who is there who would not cover his face for very shame?

At this very moment, Gentlemen, our country is a general refuge for the distressed and the persecuted of other nations. Whoever is in affliction from political occurrences in his own country looks here for shelter. Whether he be republican, flying from the oppression of thrones, or whether he be monarch or monarchist, flying from thrones that crumble and fall under or around him, he feels equal assurance, that, if he get foothold on our soil, his person will be safe, and his rights will be respected.

**America
a refuge
for the
distressed.**

Gentlemen, our country stands, at the present time, on commanding ground. Older nations, with different systems of government, may be somewhat slow to acknowledge all that justly belongs to us. But we may feel without vanity, that America is doing her part in the great work of improving human affairs. There are two principles, Gentlemen, strictly and purely American, which are now likely to prevail throughout the civilized world. Indeed, they seem

the necessary result of the progress of civilization and knowledge. These are, first, popular governments, restrained by written constitutions; and, secondly, universal education. Popular governments and general education, acting and reacting, mutually producing and reproducing each other, are the mighty agencies which in our days appear to be exciting, stimulating, and changing civilized societies. Man, everywhere, is now found demanding a participation in government, — and he will not be refused; and he demands knowledge as necessary to self-government. On the basis of these two principles, liberty and knowledge, our own American systems rest. Thus far we have not been disappointed in their results. Our existing institutions, raised on these foundations, have conferred on us almost unmixed happiness. Do we hope to better our condition by change? When we shall have nullified the present Constitution, what are we to receive in its place? As fathers, do we wish for our children better government, or better laws? As members of society, as lovers of our country, is there anything we can desire for it better than that, as ages and centuries roll over it, it may possess the same invaluable institutions which it now enjoys? For my part, Gentlemen, I can only say that I desire to thank the beneficent Author of all good for being born *where* I was born, and *when* I was born; that the portion of human existence allotted to me has been meted out to me in this goodly land, and at this interesting period. I rejoice that I have lived to see so much development of truth, so much progress of liberty, so much diffusion of virtue and happiness. And, through good report and evil report, it will be my consolation to be a citizen of a republic unequalled in the annals of the world for the

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freedom of its institutions, its high prosperity, and the prospects of good which yet lie before it. Our course, Gentlemen, is onward, straight onward, and forward.

**The path of
national
duty.**

Let us not turn to the right hand nor to the left. Our path is marked out for us, clear, plain, bright, distinctly defined, like the milky way across the heavens. If we are true to our country, in our day and generation, and those who come after us shall be true to it also, assuredly, assuredly, we shall elevate her to a pitch of prosperity and happiness, of honor and power, never yet reached by any nation beneath the sun.

THE CONSTITUTION NOT A COMPACT BETWEEN SOVEREIGN STATES

A SPEECH DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, FEB. 16, 1833, IN REPLY TO MR. CALHOUN'S SPEECH ON THE BILL FURTHER TO PROVIDE FOR THE COLLECTION OF DUTIES ON IMPORTS

MR. PRESIDENT,—The gentleman from South Carolina has admonished us to be mindful of the opinions of those who shall come after us. We must take our chance, Sir, as to the light in which posterity will regard us. I do not decline its judgment, nor withhold myself from its scrutiny. Feeling that I am performing my public duty with singleness of heart and to the best of my ability, I fearlessly trust myself to the country, now and hereafter, and leave both my motives and my character to its decision.

The gentleman has terminated his speech in a tone of threat and defiance towards this bill, even should it become a law of the land, altogether unusual in the halls of Congress. But I shall not suffer myself to be excited into warmth by his denunciation of the measure which I support. Among the feelings which at this moment fill my breast, not the least is that of regret at the position in which the gentleman has placed himself. Sir, he does himself no justice. The cause which he has espoused finds no basis in the Constitution, no

succor from public sympathy, no cheering from a patriotic community. He has no foothold on which to stand while he might display the powers of his acknowledged talents. Everything beneath his feet is hollow and treacherous. He is like a strong man struggling in a morass: every effort to extricate himself only sinks him deeper and deeper. And I fear the resemblance may be carried still farther; I fear that no friend can safely come to his relief, that no one can approach near enough to hold out a helping hand, without danger of going down himself, also, into the bottomless depths of this Serbonian bog.¹

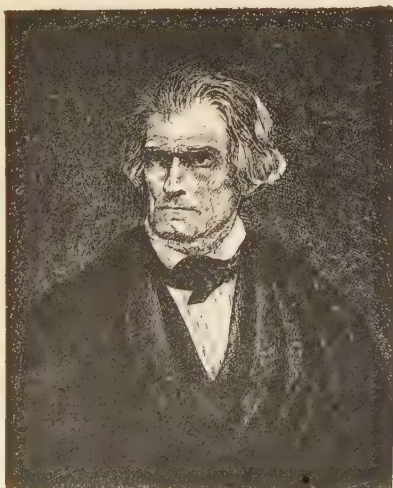
The honorable gentleman has declared that on the decision of the question now in debate may depend the cause of liberty itself. I am of the same opinion; but then, Sir, the liberty which I think is staked on the contest is not political liberty, in any general and undefined character, but our own well-understood and long-enjoyed *American* liberty.

Sir, I love Liberty no less ardently than the gentleman himself, in whatever form she may have appeared in the progress of human history. As exhibited in the master states of antiquity, as breaking out again from amidst the darkness of the Middle Ages, and beaming on the formation of new communities in modern Europe, she has, always and everywhere, charms for me. Yet, Sir, it is our own liberty, guarded by constitutions and secured by union, it is that liberty which is our paternal inheritance, it is our established, dear-bought, peculiar American liberty, to which I am chiefly devoted, and the cause of which I now mean, to the utmost of my power, to maintain and defend.

¹ Lake Serbonis, in Egypt, is said to have looked like solid land because of the sand blowing into it.

The gentleman's resolutions affirm, in effect, that these twenty-four United States are held together only by a subsisting treaty, resting for its fulfilment and continuance on no inherent power of its own, but on the plighted faith of each State; or, in other words, that our Union is but a league; and, as a consequence from this proposition, they further affirm that, as sovereigns are subject to no superior power, the States must judge, each for itself, of any alleged violation of the league; and if such violation be supposed to have occurred, each may adopt any mode or measure of redress which it shall think proper.

Calhoun's
resolutions
considered.



John C. Calhoun.

Other consequences naturally follow, too, from the main proposition. If a league between sovereign powers have no limitation as to the time of its duration, and contain nothing making it perpetual, it subsists only during the good pleasure of the parties, although no violation be complained of. If, in the opinion of either party, it be violated, such party may say that he will no longer fulfil its obligations on his part, but will consider the whole league or compact at an end, although it might be one of its stipulations

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that it should be perpetual. Upon this principle, the Congress of the United States, in 1798, declared null and void the treaty of alliance between the United States and France, though it professed to be a perpetual alliance.

If the violation of the league be accompanied with serious injuries, the suffering party, being sole judge of his own mode and measure of redress, has a right to indemnify himself by reprisals on the offending members of the league; and reprisals, if the circumstances of the case require it, may be followed by direct, avowed, and public war.

The necessary import of the resolution, therefore, is, that the United States are connected only by a league; **League or nation?** that it is in the good pleasure of every State to decide how long she will choose to remain a member of this league; that any State may determine the extent of her own obligations under it, and accept or reject what shall be decided by the whole; that she may also determine whether her rights have been violated, what is the extent of the injury done her, and what mode and measure of redress her wrongs may make it fit and expedient for her to adopt. The result of the whole is, that any State may secede at pleasure; that any State may resist a law which she herself may choose to say exceeds the power of Congress; and that, as a sovereign power, she may redress her own grievances, by her own arm, at her own discretion. She may make reprisals; she may cruise against the property of other members of the league; she may authorize captures, and make open war.

If, Sir, this be our political condition, it is time the people of the United States understood it. Let us look for a moment to the practical consequences of these

opinions. One State, holding an embargo law unconstitutional, may declare her opinion, and withdraw from the Union. *She* secedes. Another, forming and expressing the same judgment on a law Secession. laying duties on imports, may withdraw also. *She* secedes. And as, in her opinion, money has been taken out of the pockets of her citizens illegally, under pretence of this law, and as she has power to redress their wrongs, she may demand satisfaction; and, if refused, she may take it with a strong hand. The gentleman has himself pronounced the collection of duties, under existing laws, to be nothing but robbery. Robbers, of course, may be rightfully dispossessed of the fruits of their flagitious crimes; and therefore, reprisals, impositions on the commerce of other States, foreign alliances against them, or open war, are all modes of redress justly open to the discretion and choice of South Carolina; for she is to judge of her own rights, and to seek satisfaction for her own wrongs, in her own way.

But, Sir, a *third* State is of opinion not only that these laws of imposts are constitutional, but that it is the absolute duty of Congress to pass and to maintain such laws; and that, by omitting to pass and maintain them, its constitutional obligations would be grossly disregarded. She herself relinquished the power of protection, she might allege, and allege truly, and gave it up to Congress, on the faith that Congress would exercise it. If Congress now refuse to exercise it, Congress does, as she may insist, break the condition of the grant, and thus manifestly violate the Constitution; and for this violation of the Constitution, *she* may threaten to secede also. Virginia may secede, and hold the fortresses in the Chesapeake. The Western States

may secede, and take to their own use the public lands. Louisiana may secede, if she choose, form a foreign alliance, and hold the mouth of the Mississippi. If one State may secede, ten may do so, twenty may do so, twenty-three may do so. Sir, as these secessions go on, one after another, what is to constitute the United States? Whose will be the army? Whose the navy? Who will pay the debts? Who fulfil the public treaties? Who perform the constitutional guaranties? Who govern this District and the Territories? Who retain the public property?

Mr. President, every man must see that these are all questions which can arise only *after a revolution*. They presuppose the breaking up of the government. While the Constitution lasts, they are repressed; they spring up to annoy and startle us only from its grave.

The Constitution does not provide for events which must be preceded by its own destruction. Secession,

**Nullification
as revolu-
tionary as
secession.**

therefore, since it must bring these consequences with it, is revolutionary, and nullification is equally revolutionary. What is revolution? Why, Sir, that is revolution which overturns, or controls, or successfully resists, the existing public authority; that which arrests the exercise of the supreme power; that which introduces a new paramount authority into the rule of the State. Now, Sir, this is the precise object of nullification. It attempts to supersede the supreme legislative authority. It arrests the arm of the executive magistrate. It interrupts the exercise of the accustomed judicial power. Under the name of an ordinance, it declares null and void, within the State, all the revenue laws of the United States. Is not this revolutionary? Sir, so soon as this ordinance shall be carried into effect, a

revolution will have commenced in South Carolina. She will have thrown off the authority to which her citizens have heretofore been subject. She will have declared her own opinions and her own will to be above the laws and above the power of those who are intrusted with their administration. If she makes good these declarations, she is revolutionized. As to her, it is as distinctly a change of the supreme power as the American Revolution of 1776. That revolution did not subvert government in all its forms. It did not subvert local laws and municipal administrations. It only threw off the dominion of a power claiming to be superior, and to have a right, in many important respects, to exercise legislative authority. Thinking this authority to have been usurped or abused, the American Colonies, now the United States, bade it defiance, and freed themselves from it by means of a revolution. But that revolution left them with their own municipal laws still, and the forms of local government. If Carolina now shall effectually resist the laws of Congress; if she shall be her own judge, take her remedy into her own hands, obey the laws of the Union when she pleases and disobey them when she pleases, she will relieve herself from a paramount power as distinctly as the American Colonies did the same thing in 1776. In other words, she will achieve, as to herself, a revolution.

But, Sir, while practical nullification in South Carolina would be, as to herself, actual and distinct revolution, its necessary tendency must also be to spread revolution, and to break up the Con-stitution, as to all the other States. It strikes a deadly blow at the vital principle of the whole Union. To allow State resistance to the laws of Congress to be

A prophecy
of 1861.

rightful and proper, to admit nullification in some States, and yet not expect to see a dismemberment of the entire government, appears to me the wildest illusion, and the most extravagant folly. The gentleman seems not conscious of the direction or the rapidity of his own course. The current of his opinions sweeps him along, he knows not whither. To begin with nullification, with the avowed intent, nevertheless, not to proceed to secession, dismemberment, and general revolution, is as if one were to take the plunge of Niagara, and cry out that he would stop half-way down. In the one case, as in the other, the rash adventurer must go to the bottom of the dark abyss below, were it not that that abyss has no discovered bottom.

And now, Sir, against all these theories and opinions, I maintain, —

1. That the Constitution of the United States is not a league, confederacy, or compact between the people of the several States in their sovereign capacities; but a government proper, founded on the adoption of the people, and creating direct relations between itself and individuals.

The Constitution
supreme.

2. That no State authority has power to dissolve these relations; that nothing can dissolve them but revolution; and that, consequently, there can be no such thing as secession without revolution.

Only revolution
can overthrow it.

3. That there is a supreme law, consisting of the Constitution of the United States, and acts of Congress passed in pursuance of it, and treaties; and that, in cases not capable of assuming the character of a suit in law or equity, Congress must judge of, and finally

interpret, this supreme law so often as it has occasion to pass acts of legislation; and in cases capable of assuming, and actually assuming, the character of a suit, the Supreme Court of the United States is the final interpreter.

The Supreme Court the final interpreter.

4. That an attempt by a State to abrogate, annul, or nullify an act of Congress, or to arrest its operation within her limits, on the ground that, in her opinion, such law is unconstitutional, is a direct usurpation on the just powers of the general government, and on the equal rights of other States; a plain violation of the Constitution, and a proceeding essentially revolutionary in its character and tendency.

State usurpation.

Mr. President, if the friends of nullification should be able to propagate their opinions, and give them practical effect, they would, in my judgment, prove themselves the most skilful "architects of ruin," the most effectual extinguishers of high-raised expectation, the greatest blasters of human hopes, that any age has produced. They would stand up to proclaim, in tones which would pierce the ears of half the human race, that the last great experiment of representative government had failed. They would send forth sounds at the hearing of which the doctrine of the divine right of kings would feel, even in its grave, a returning sensation of vitality and resuscitation. Millions of eyes, of those who now feed their inherent love of liberty on the success of the American example, would turn away from beholding our dismemberment, and find no place on earth whereon to rest their gratified sight. Amidst the incantations and orgies of nullification, secession, disunion, and revolution, would be celebrated the funeral rites of constitutional and republican liberty.

But, Sir, if the government do its duty, if it act with firmness and with moderation, these opinions cannot prevail. Be assured, Sir, be assured, that, among the political sentiments of this people, the love of union is still uppermost. They will stand fast by the Constitution, and by those who defend it. I rely on no temporary expedients, on no political combination; but I rely on the true American feeling, the genuine patriotism of the people, and the imperative decision of the public voice. Disorder and confusion, indeed, may arise; scenes of commotion and contest are threatened, and perhaps may come. With my whole heart I pray for the continuance of the domestic peace and quiet of the country. I desire, most ardently, the restoration of affection and harmony to all its parts. I desire that every citizen of the whole country may look to this government with no other sentiments than those of grateful respect and attachment. But I cannot yield even to kind feelings the cause of the Constitution, the true glory of the country, and the great trust which we hold in our hands for succeeding ages. If the Constitution cannot be maintained without meeting these scenes of commotion and contest, however unwelcome, they must come. We cannot, we must not, we dare not, omit to do that which, in our judgment, the safety of the Union requires. Not regardless of consequences, we must yet meet consequences; seeing the hazards which surround the discharge of public duty, it must yet be discharged. For myself, Sir, I shun no responsibility justly devolving on me, here or elsewhere, in attempting to maintain the cause. I am bound to it by indissoluble ties of affection and duty, and I shall cheerfully partake in its fortunes and its fate. I am ready to perform my

The duty of
the govern-
ment.

own appropriate part, whenever and wherever the occasion may call on me, and to take my chance among those upon whom blows may fall first and fall thickest. I shall exert every faculty I possess in aiding to prevent the Constitution from being nullified, destroyed, or impaired; and even should I see it fall, I will still, with a voice feeble, perhaps, but earnest as ever issued from human lips, and with fidelity and zeal which nothing shall extinguish, call on the PEOPLE to come to its rescue.¹

¹ Mr. Calhoun's resolutions, in support of which he spoke, were as follows :

"*Resolved*, That the people of the several States composing these United States are united as parties to a constitutional compact, to which the people of each State acceded as a separate sovereign community, each binding itself by its own particular ratification; and that the union, of which the said compact is the bond, is a union *between the States* ratifying the same.

"*Resolved*, That the people of the several States thus united by the constitutional compact, in forming that instrument, and in creating a general government to carry into effect the objects for which they were formed, delegated to that government, for that purpose, certain definite powers, to be exercised jointly, reserving, at the same time, each State to itself, the residuary mass of powers, to be exercised by its own separate government; and that whenever the general government assumes the exercise of powers not delegated by the compact, its acts are unauthorized, and are of no effect; and that the same government is not made the final judge of the powers delegated to it, since that would make its discretion, and not the Constitution, the measure of its powers; but that, as in all other cases of compact among sovereign parties, without any common judge, each has an equal right to judge for itself, as well of the infraction as of the mode and measure of redress.

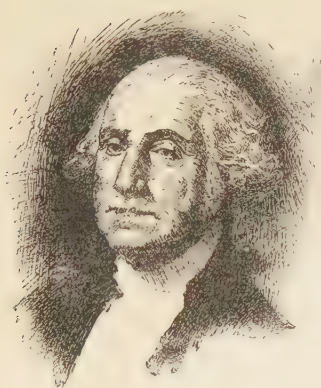
"*Resolved*, That the assertions, that the people of these United States, taken collectively as individuals, are now, or ever have been, united on the principle of the social compact, and, as such, are now formed into one nation or people, or that they have ever been so united in any one stage of their political existence; that the people of the several States composing the Union have not, as members thereof, retained their sovereignty; that the allegiance of their citizens has been transferred to the general government; that they have parted with the right of

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punishing treason through their respective State governments; and that they have not the right of judging in the last resort as to the extent of the powers reserved, and of consequence of those delegated,—are not only without foundation in truth, but are contrary to the most certain and plain historical facts, and the clearest deductions of reason; and that all exercise of power on the part of the general government, or any of its departments, claiming authority from such erroneous assumptions, must of necessity be unconstitutional,—must tend, directly and inevitably, to subvert the sovereignty of the States, to destroy the federal character of the Union, and to rear on its ruins a consolidated government, without constitutional check or limitation, and which must necessarily terminate in the loss of liberty itself.”

THE CHARACTER OF WASHINGTON

A SPEECH DELIVERED AT A PUBLIC DINNER IN THE
CITY OF WASHINGTON, FEB. 22, 1832, THE CENTENNIAL
ANNIVERSARY OF WASHINGTON'S BIRTH



George Washington.

WE are met to testify our regard for him whose name is intimately blended with whatever belongs most essentially to the prosperity, the liberty, the free institutions, and the renown of our country. That name was of power to rally a nation, in the hour of thick-thronging public disasters and calamities; that name shone, amid the storm of war, a beacon light, to

cheer and guide the country's friends; it flamed, too, like a meteor, to repel her foes. That name, in the days of peace, was a loadstone, attracting to itself a whole people's confidence, a whole people's love, and the whole world's respect. That name, descending with all time, spreading over the whole earth, and uttered in all the languages belonging to the tribes and races of men, will forever be pronounced with affectionate gratitude by every one in

The power
of the name
of Wash-
ington.

whose breast there shall arise an aspiration for human rights and human liberty.

We perform this grateful duty, Gentlemen, at the expiration of a hundred years from his birth, near the place, so cherished and beloved by him, where his dust now reposes, and in the capital which bears his own immortal name.

All experience evinces that human sentiments are strongly influenced by associations. The recurrence of anniversaries, or of longer periods of time, naturally freshens the recollection, and deepens the impression, of events with which they are historically connected. Renowned places, also, have a power to awaken feeling, which all acknowledge. No American can pass by the fields of Bunker Hill, Monmouth, and Camden, as if they were ordinary spots on the earth's surface. Whoever visits them feels the sentiment of love of country kindling anew, as if the spirit that belonged to the transactions which have rendered these places distinguished still hovered round, with power to move and excite all who in future time may approach them.

But neither of these sources of emotion equals the power with which great moral examples affect the mind.

Washington's great moral example to the youth of America.

When sublime virtues cease to be abstractions, when they become embodied in human character, and exemplified in human conduct, we should be false to our own nature if we did not indulge in the spontaneous effusions of our gratitude and our admiration. A true lover of the virtue of patriotism delights to contemplate its purest models; and that love of country may be well suspected which affects to soar so high into the regions of sentiment as to be lost and absorbed in the abstract feeling, and becomes too elevated or too refined to glow

with fervor in the commendation or the love of individual benefactors. All this is unnatural. It is as if one should be so enthusiastic a lover of poetry as to care nothing for Homer or Milton; so passionately attached to eloquence as to be indifferent to Tully¹ and Chatham; or such a devotee to the arts, in such an ecstasy with the elements of beauty, proportion, and expression, as to regard the masterpieces of Raphael and Michael Angelo with coldness or contempt. We may be assured, Gentlemen, that he who really loves the thing itself, loves its finest exhibitions. A true friend of his country loves her friends and benefactors, and thinks it no degradation to commend and commemorate them. The voluntary outpouring of the public feeling, made to-day, from the north to the south, and from the east to the west, proves this sentiment to be both just and natural. In the cities and in the villages, in the public temples and in the family circles, among all ages and sexes, gladdened voices to-day bespeak grateful hearts and a freshened recollection of the virtues of the Father of his Country. And it will be so, in all time to come, so long as public virtue is itself an object of regard. The ingenuous youth of America will hold up to themselves the bright model of Washington's example, and study to be what they behold; they will contemplate his character till all its virtues spread out and display themselves to their delighted vision; as the earliest astronomers, the shepherds on the plains of Babylon, gazed at the stars till they saw them form into clusters and constellations, overpowering at length the eyes of the beholders with the united blaze of a thousand lights.

¹ At the beginning of the nineteenth century Marcus Tullius Cicero was often called Tully.

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Gentlemen, we are at a point of a century from the birth of Washington; and what a century it has been!

A wonderful age and country.

During its course, the human mind has seemed to proceed with a sort of geometric velocity, accomplishing for human intelligence and human freedom more than had been done in fives or tens of centuries preceding. Washington stands at the commencement of a new era, as well as at the head of the New World. A century from the birth of Washington has changed the world. The country of Washington has been the theatre on which a great part of that change has been wrought, and Washington himself a principal agent by which it has been accomplished. His age and his country are equally full of wonders; and of both he is the chief.

If the poetical prediction, uttered a few years before his birth, be true; if indeed it be designed by Providence that the grandest exhibition of human character and human affairs shall be made on this theatre of the Western world; if it be true that,

“The four first acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day;
Time’s noblest offspring is the last”;¹

how could this imposing, swelling, final scene be appropriately opened, how could its intense interest be adequately sustained, but by the introduction of just such a character as our Washington?

Washington had attained his manhood when that spark of liberty was struck out in his own country which has since kindled into a flame and shot its beams over the earth. In the flow of a century from his birth,

¹ Bishop George Berkeley’s (1684–1753) “On the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America.”



the world has changed in science, in arts, in the extent of commerce, in the improvement of navigation, and in all that relates to the civilization of man.

But it is the spirit of human freedom, the new elevation of individual man, in his moral, social, and political character, leading the whole long train of other improvements, which has most remarkably distinguished the era. Society, in this century, has not made its progress, like Chinese skill, by a greater acuteness of ingenuity in trifles; it has not merely lashed itself to an increased speed round the old circles of thought and action; but it has assumed a new character; it has raised itself from *beneath* governments to a participation *in* governments; it has mixed moral and political objects with the daily pursuits of individual men; and, with a freedom and strength before altogether unknown, it has applied to these objects the whole power of the human understanding. It has been the era, in short, when the social principle has triumphed over the feudal principle; when society has maintained its rights against military power, and established, on foundations never hereafter to be shaken, its competency to govern itself.

The spirit
of human
freedom.

It was the extraordinary fortune of Washington, that, having been intrusted, in revolutionary times, with the supreme military command, and having fulfilled that trust with equal renown for wisdom and for valor, he should be placed at the head of the first government in which an attempt was to be made on a large scale to rear the fabric of social order on the basis of a written constitution and of a pure representative principle. A government was to be established, without a throne, without an aristocracy, without castes, orders, or privileges; and this government, instead of being a democ-

racy existing and acting within the walls of a single city, was to be extended over a vast country of different climates, interests, and habits, and of various commun-
 ions of our common Christian faith. The
 A new gov- experiment certainly was entirely new. A
 ernmental popular government of this extent, it was
 experiment. evident, could be framed only by carrying into full ef-
 fect the principle of representation or of delegated
 power; and the world was to see whether society could,
 by the strength of this principle, maintain its own peace
 and good government, carry forward its own great in-
 terests, and conduct itself to political renown and glory.
 By the benignity of Providence, this experiment, so full
 of interest to us and to our posterity forever, so full of
 interest, indeed, to the world in its present generation
 and in all its generations to come, was suffered to com-
 mence under the guidance of Washington. Destined
 for this high career, he was fitted for it by wisdom, by
 virtue, by patriotism, by discretion, by whatever can
 inspire confidence in man toward man. In entering on
 the untried scenes, early disappointment and the prema-
 ture extinction of all hope of success would have been
 certain, had it not been that there did exist throughout
 the country, in a most extraordinary degree, an unwaver-
 ing trust in him who stood at the helm.

I remarked, Gentlemen, that the whole world was and
 is interested in the result of this experiment. And is it
 not so? Do we deceive ourselves, or is it
 The world interested in the true that at this moment the career which
 in the experiment. this government is running is among the
 most attractive objects to the civilized world? Do we
 deceive ourselves, or is it true that at this moment that
 love of liberty and that understanding of its true prin-
 ciples which are flying over the whole earth, as on the

wings of all the winds, are really and truly of American origin?

At the period of the birth of Washington there existed in Europe no political liberty in large communities, except in the provinces of Holland, and except that England herself had set a great example, so far as it went, by her glorious Revolution of 1688. Everywhere else, despotic power was predominant, and the feudal or military principle held the mass of mankind in hopeless bondage. One-half of Europe was crushed beneath the Bourbon sceptre, and no conception of political liberty, no hope even of religious toleration, existed among that nation which was America's first ally. The king was the state, the king was the country, the king was all. There was one king, with power not derived from his people, and too high to be questioned; and the rest were all subjects, with no political right but obedience. All above was intangible power, all below quiet subjection. A recent occurrence in the French chamber shows us how public opinion on these subjects is changed. A minister had spoken of the "king's subjects." "There are no subjects," exclaimed hundreds of voices at once, "in a country where the people make the king!"

Importance
of the
English
Revolution
of 1688.

Gentlemen, the spirit of human liberty and of free government, nurtured and grown into strength and beauty in America, has stretched its course into the midst of the nations. Like an emanation from Heaven, it has gone forth, and it will not return void. It must change, it is fast changing, the face of the earth. Our great, our high duty is to show, in our own example, that this spirit is a spirit of health as well as a spirit of power; that its benignity is as great as its strength; that its efficiency to secure individual rights, social rela-

tions, and moral order, is equal to the irresistible force with which it prostrates principalities and powers. The world, at this moment, is regarding us with a willing, but something of a fearful admiration. Its deep and awful anxiety is to learn whether free States may be stable, as well as free; whether popular power may be trusted, as well as feared; in short, whether wise, regular, and virtuous self-government is a vision for the contemplation of theorists, or a truth established, illustrated, and brought into practice in the country of Washington.

Gentlemen, for the earth which we inhabit, and the whole circle of the sun, for all the unborn races of mankind, we seem to hold in our hands, for their weal or woe, the fate of this experiment. If we fail, who shall venture the repetition? If our example shall prove to be one not of encouragement, but of terror, not fit to be imitated, but fit only to be shunned, where else shall the world look for free models? If this great *Western Sun* be struck out of the firmament, at what other fountain shall the lamp of liberty hereafter be lighted? What other orb shall emit a ray to glimmer, even, on the darkness of the world?

The United
States a
Western
Sun.

There is no danger of our overrating or overstating the important part which we are now acting in human affairs. It should not flatter our personal self-respect, but it should reanimate our patriotic virtues, and inspire us with a deeper and more solemn sense both of our privileges and of our duties. We cannot wish better for our country, nor for the world, than that the same spirit which influenced Washington may influence all who succeed him; and that the same blessing from above, which attended his efforts, may also attend theirs.

The principles of Washington's administration are not left doubtful. They are to be found in the Constitution itself, in the great measures recommended and approved by him, in his speeches to Congress, and in that most interesting paper, his Farewell Address to the people of the United States. The success of the government under his administration is the highest proof of the soundness of these principles. And, after an experience of thirty-five years, what is there which an enemy could condemn? What is there which either his friends, or the friends of the country, could wish to have been otherwise? I speak, of course, of great measures and leading principles.

Washington's Farewell Address.

In the first place, all his measures were right in their intent. He stated the whole basis of his own great character, when he told the country, in the homely phrase of the proverb, that honesty is the best policy. One of the most striking things ever said of him is, that "*he changed mankind's ideas of political greatness.*"¹ To commanding talents, and to success, the common elements of such greatness, he added a disregard of self, a spotlessness of motive, a steady submission to every public and private duty, which threw far into the shade the whole crowd of vulgar great. The object of his regard was the whole country. No part of it was enough to fill his enlarged patriotism. His love of glory, so far as that may be supposed to have influenced him at all, spurned everything short of general approbation. It would have been nothing to him that his partisans or his favorites outnumbered, or outvoted, or outmanaged, or outclamored, those of other leaders. He

¹ A remark by Fisher Ames (1758-1808), of Massachusetts, — perhaps the extremest Federalist of his time.

had no favorites; he rejected all partisanship: and, acting honestly for the universal good, he deserved, what he has so richly enjoyed, the universal love.

His principle it was to act right, and to trust the people for support; his principle it was not to follow the lead of sinister and selfish ends, nor to rely on the little arts of party delusion to obtain public sanction for such a course. Born for his country and for the world, he did not give up to party what was meant for mankind. The consequence is, that his fame is as durable as his principles, as lasting as truth and virtue themselves. While the hundreds whom party excitement, and temporary circumstances, and casual combinations, have raised into transient notoriety, sink again, like thin bubbles, bursting and dissolving into the great ocean, Washington's fame is like the rock which bounds that ocean, and at whose feet its billows are destined to break harmlessly forever.

The maxims upon which Washington conducted our foreign relations were few and simple. The first was an entire and indisputable impartiality towards foreign States.¹ He adhered to this rule of public conduct, against very strong inducements to depart from it, and when the popularity of the moment seemed to favor such a departure. In the next place, he maintained true dignity and unsullied honor in all communications with foreign States. It was among the high duties devolved upon him to introduce our new government into the circle of civilized States and powerful nations. Not arrogant or assuming, with no unbecoming or supercilious bearing, he yet exacted for it from all others

¹ The famous phrase "honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none" was not Washington's, but Jefferson's.

His conduct of America's foreign relations.

entire and punctilious respect. He demanded, and he obtained at once, a standing of perfect equality for his country in the society of nations; nor was there a prince or potentate of his day, whose personal character carried with it, into the intercourse of other States, a greater degree of respect and veneration.

He regarded other nations only as they stood in political relations to us. With their internal affairs, their political parties and dissensions, he scrupulously abstained from all interference; and, on the other hand, he repelled with spirit all such interference by others with us or our concerns. His sternest rebuke, the most indignant measure of his whole administration, was aimed against such an attempted interference. He felt it as an attempt to wound the national honor, and resented it accordingly.

The reiterated admonitions in his Farewell Address show his deep fears that foreign influence would insinuate itself into our counsels through the channels of domestic dissension, and obtain a sympathy with our own temporary parties. Against all such dangers he most earnestly entreats the country to guard itself. He appeals to its patriotism, to its self-respect, to its own honor, to every consideration connected with its welfare and happiness, to resist, at the very beginning, all tendencies towards such connection of foreign interests with our own affairs. With a tone of earnestness nowhere else found, even in his last affectionate farewell advice to his countrymen, he says, "Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens,) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake; since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government."

Foreign
influence
a foe of
republican
government.

Lastly, on the subject of foreign relations, Washington never forgot that we had interests peculiar to ourselves. The primary political concerns of Europe, he saw, did not affect us. We had nothing to do with her balance of power, her family compacts, or her successions to thrones. We were placed in a condition favorable to neutrality during European wars, and to the enjoyment of all the great advantages of that relation. “Why, then,” he asks us, “why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice?”

Indeed, Gentlemen, Washington’s Farewell Address is full of truths important at all times, and particularly deserving consideration at the present. With a sagacity which brought the future before him, and made it like the present, he saw and pointed out the dangers that even at this moment most imminently threaten us. I hardly know how a greater service of that kind could now be done to the community, than by a renewed and wide diffusion of that admirable paper, and an earnest invitation to every man in the country to reperuse and consider it. Its political maxims are invaluable; its exhortations to love of country and to brotherly affection among citizens, touching; and the solemnity with which it urges the observance of moral duties, and impresses the power of religious obligation, gives to it the highest character of truly disinterested, sincere, parental advice.

The domestic policy of Washington found its polestar in the avowed objects of the Constitution itself.

He sought so to administer that Constitution as to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty. These were objects interesting, in the highest degree, to the whole country, and his policy embraced the whole country. Washington's domestic policy.

Among his earliest and most important duties was the organization of the government itself, the choice of his confidential advisers, and the various appointments to office. This duty, so important and delicate, when a whole government was to be organized, and all its offices for the first time filled, was yet not difficult to him; for he had no sinister ends to accomplish, no clamorous partisans to gratify, no pledges to redeem, no object to be regarded but simply the public good. It was a plain, straightforward matter, a mere honest choice of good men for the public service.

His own singleness of purpose, his disinterested patriotism, were evinced by the selection of his first cabinet, and by the manner in which he filled the seats of justice, and other places of high trust. He sought for men fit for offices; not for offices which might suit men. Above personal considerations, above local considerations, above party considerations, he felt that he could only discharge the sacred trust which the country had placed in his hands, by a diligent inquiry after real merit, and a conscientious preference of virtue and talent. The whole country was the field of his selection. He explored that whole field, looking only for whatever it contained most worthy and distinguished. He was, indeed, most successful, and he deserved success for the purity of his motives, the liberality of his sentiments, and his enlarged and manly policy. His first cabinet.

Washington's administration established the national credit, made provision for the public debt, and for that patriotic army whose interests and welfare were always so dear to him; and, by laws wisely framed, and of admirable effect, raised the commerce and navigation of the country, almost at once, from depression and ruin to a state of prosperity. Nor were his eyes open to these interests alone. He viewed with equal concern its agriculture and manufactures, and, so far as they came within the regular exercise of the powers of this government, they experienced regard and favor.

It should not be omitted, even in this slight reference to the general measures and general principles of the first President, that he saw and felt the full value and importance of the judicial department of the government. An upright and able administration of the laws he held to be alike indispensable to private happiness and public liberty. The temple of justice, in his opinion, was a sacred place, and he would profane and pollute it who should call any to minister in it, not spotless in character, not incorruptible in integrity, not competent by talent and learning, not a fit object of unhesitating trust.

Among other admonitions, Washington has left us, in his last communication to his country, an exhortation against the excesses of party spirit. A fire not to be quenched, he yet conjures us not to fan and feed the flame. Undoubtedly, Gentlemen, it is the greatest danger of our system and of our time. Undoubtedly, if that system should be overthrown, it will be the work of excessive party spirit, acting on the government, which is dangerous enough, or acting *in* the government, which is a thousand times

**Important
measures of
his admin-
istration.**

**His opinion
of the
dangers of
party spirit.**

more dangerous ; for government then becomes nothing but organized party, and, in the strange vicissitudes of human affairs, it may come at last, perhaps, to exhibit the singular paradox of government itself being in opposition to its own powers, at war with the very elements of its own existence. Such cases are hopeless. As men may be protected against murder, but cannot be guarded against suicide, so government may be shielded from the assaults of external foes, but nothing can save it when it chooses to lay violent hands on itself.

Finally, Gentlemen, there was in the breast of Washington one sentiment so deeply felt, so constantly uppermost, that no proper occasion escaped without **His love of the Union.** From the letter which he signed in behalf of the Convention when the Constitution was sent out to the people, to the moment when he put his hand to that last paper in which he addressed his countrymen, the Union, — the Union was the great object of his thoughts. In that first letter he tells them that to him and his brethren of the Convention, union appears to be the greatest interest of every true American ; and in that last paper he conjures them to regard that unity of government which constitutes them one people as the very palladium of their prosperity and safety, and the security of liberty itself. He regarded the union of these States less as one of our blessings, than as the great treasure-house which contained them all. Here, in his judgment, was the great magazine of all our means of prosperity ; here, as he thought, and as every true American still thinks, are deposited all our animating prospects, all our solid hopes for future greatness. He has taught us to maintain this union, not by seeking to enlarge the powers of the government, on the

one hand, nor by surrendering them, on the other ; but by an administration of them at once firm and moderate, pursuing objects truly national, and carried on in a spirit of justice and equity.

The extreme solicitude for the preservation of the Union, at all times manifested by him, shows not only the opinion he entertained of its importance, but his clear perception of those causes which were likely to spring up to endanger it, and which, if once they should overthrow the present system, would leave little hope of any future beneficial reunion. Of all the presumptions indulged by presumptuous man, that is one of the rashest which looks for repeated and favorable opportunities for the deliberate establishment of a united government over distinct and widely extended communities. Such a thing has happened once in human affairs, and but once ; the event stands out as a prominent exception to all ordinary history ; and unless we suppose ourselves running into an age of miracles, we may not expect its repetition.

Washington, therefore, could regard, and did regard, nothing as of paramount political interest but the integrity of the Union itself. With a united government, well administered, he saw that we had nothing to fear ; and without it, nothing to hope. The sentiment is just, and its momentous truth should solemnly impress the whole country. If we might regard our country as personated in the spirit of Washington, if we might consider him as representing her, in her past renown, her present prosperity, and her future career, and as in that character demanding of us all to account for our conduct, as political men or as private citizens, how should he answer him who has ventured to talk of dis-

union and dismemberment? Or how should he answer him who dwells perpetually on local interests, and fans every kindling flame of local prejudice? How should he answer him who would array State against State, interest against interest, and party against party, careless of the continuance of that unity of government which constitutes us one people?

The political prosperity which this country has attained, and which it now enjoys, has been acquired mainly through the instrumentality of the present government. While this agent continues, the capacity of attaining to still higher degrees of prosperity exists also. We have, while this lasts, a political life capable of beneficial exertion, with power to resist or overcome misfortunes, to sustain us against the ordinary accidents of human affairs, and to promote, by active efforts, every public interest. But dismemberment strikes at the very being which preserves these faculties. It would lay its rude and ruthless hand on this great agent itself. It would sweep away, not only what we possess, but all power of regaining lost, or acquiring new possessions. It would leave the country not only bereft of its prosperity and happiness, but without limbs, or organs, or faculties, by which to exert itself hereafter in the pursuit of that prosperity and happiness.

Other misfortunes may be borne, or their effects overcome. If disastrous war should sweep our commerce from the ocean, another generation may renew it; if it exhaust our treasury, future industry may replenish it; if it desolate and lay waste our fields, still, under a new cultivation, they will grow green again, and ripen to future harvests. It were but a trifle even if the walls of yonder Capitol were to crumble, if its lofty pillars

Dismemberment of the United States the greatest of evils.

should fall, and its gorgeous decorations be all covered by the dust of the valley. All these might be rebuilt. But who shall reconstruct the fabric of demolished government? Who shall rear again the well-proportioned columns of constitutional liberty? Who shall frame together the skilful architecture which unites national sovereignty with State rights, individual security, and public prosperity? No, if these columns fall, they will be raised not again. Like the Coliseum and the Parthenon, they will be destined to a mournful, a melancholy immortality. Bitterer tears, however, will flow over them than were ever shed over the monuments of Roman or Grecian art; for they will be the remnants of a more glorious edifice than Greece or Rome ever saw, the edifice of constitutional American liberty.

But let us hope for better things. Let us trust in that gracious Being who has hitherto held our country as in the hollow of his hand. Let us trust to the virtue and the intelligence of the people, and to the efficacy of religious obligation. Let us trust to the influence of Washington's example. Let us hope that that fear of Heaven which expels all other fear, and that regard to duty which transcends all other regard, may influence public men and private citizens, and lead our country still onward in her happy career. Full of these gratifying anticipations and hopes, let us look forward to the end of that century which is now commenced. A hundred years hence, other disciples of Washington will celebrate his birth, with no less of sincere admiration than we now commemorate it. When they shall meet, as we now meet, to do themselves and him that honor, so surely as they shall see the blue summits of his native mountains rise in the horizon, so surely as they shall behold the river on whose banks he lived, and on whose

banks he rests, still flowing on toward the sea, so surely may they see, as we now see, the flag of the Union floating on the top of the Capitol; and then, as now, may the sun in his course visit no land more free, more happy, more lovely, than this our own country!

APPENDIX C

WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS :

The period for a new election of a citizen, to administer the executive government of the United States, being not far distant, and the time actually arrived, when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person, who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprize you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those, out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation, which binds a dutiful citizen to his country ; and that, in withdrawing the tender of service, which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest ; no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness ; but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped, that it would have been much earlier in my

power, consistently with motives, which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement, from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you ; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice, that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty, or propriety ; and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that, in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions, with which I first undertook the arduous trust, were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say, that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself ; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more, that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied, that, if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe, that, while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment, which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude, which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred upon me ; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me ; and

for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions, agitated in every direction, were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained; that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing, as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation, which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me, on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments, which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a People. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of

a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of Government, which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so: for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very Liberty, which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee, that, from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment, that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national Union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the Palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion, that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens, by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of

Patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together; the Independence and Liberty you possess are the work of joint counsels, and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those, which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the Union of the whole.

The *North*, in an unrestrained intercourse with the *South*, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds, in the productions of the latter, great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The *South*, in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the *North*, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the *North*, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and, while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted. The *East*, in a like intercourse with the *West*, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications by land and water, will more and more find, a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The *West* derives from the *East* supplies requisite to its growth and comfort, and, what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the *secure* enjoyment of indispensable *outlets* for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest

as *one nation*. Any other tenure by which the *West* can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connexion with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While, then, every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in Union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and, what is of inestimable value, they must derive from Union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighboring countries not tied together by the same governments, which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues would stimulate and embitter. Hence, likewise, they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments, which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to Republican Liberty. In this sense it is, that your Union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the UNION as a primary object of Patriotic desire. Is there a doubt, whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope, that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to Union, affect-

ing all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those, who in any quarter may endeavour to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes, which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by *Geographical* discriminations, *Northern* and *Southern*, *Atlantic* and *Western*; whence designing men may endeavour to excite a belief, that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart-burnings, which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those, who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head; they have seen, in the negotiation by the Executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event, throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the General Government and in the Atlantic States unfriendly to their interests in regard to the *MISSISSIPPI*; they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain, and that with Spain, which secure to them every thing they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the *UNION* by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren, and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a Government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however

strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute; they must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions, which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a Constitution of Government better calculated than your former for an intimate Union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This Government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true Liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their Constitutions of Government. But the Constitution which at any time exists, till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish Government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established Government.

All obstructions to the execution of the Laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put, in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party, often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of fac-

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tion, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common counsels, and modified by mutual interests.

However combinations or associations of the above descriptions may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterwards the very engines, which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your Government, and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the Constitution, alterations, which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments, as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard, by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country; that facility in changes, upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion, exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion; and remember, especially, that, for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprise of faction, to confine each member of the

society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party, generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but, in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries, which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of Public Liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind, (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight,) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the Public Councils, and enfeeble the Public Administration. It agitates the Community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another, foment

occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion, that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the Government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of Liberty. This within certain limits is probably true; and in Governments of a Monarchical cast, Patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favor, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in Governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And, there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution, in those intrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and proneness to abuse it, which predominates in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the Guardian of the Public Weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country and under our own

eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way, which the constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for, though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit, which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and Citizens. The mere Politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connexions with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation *desert* the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

It is substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule, indeed, extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who, that is a sincere friend to it, can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, insti-

tutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is, to use it as sparingly as possible; avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts, which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burthen, which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should coöperate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be Revenue; that to have Revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised, which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant, that the intrinsic embarrassment, inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties), ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue, which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towards all Nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and Morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be, that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great Nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and

benevolence. Who can doubt, that, in the course of time and things, the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages, which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be, that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a Nation with its Virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential, than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular Nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded; and that, in place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The Nation, which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests. The Nation, prompted by ill-will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the Government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The Government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times, it makes the animosity of the Nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty, of Nations has been the victim.

So likewise, a passionate attachment of one Nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite Nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest, in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, be-

trays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite Nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the Nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained; and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens, (who devote themselves to the favorite nation,) facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding, with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base of foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent Patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practise the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the Public Councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens,) the jealousy of a free people ought to be *constantly* awake; since history and experience prove, that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of Republican Government. But that jealousy, to be useful, must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favorite,

are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *political* connexion as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality, we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world; so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to pri-

vate affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But, in my opinion, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing, with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them, conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another: that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character: that, by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion, which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course, which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But, if I may even flatter

myself, that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good ; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism ; this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relating to the still subsisting war in Europe, my Proclamation of the 22d of April, 1793, is the index to my Plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice, and by that of your Representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination, with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest to take, a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.

The considerations, which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe, that, according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the Belligerent Powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without any thing more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

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Continuation of the paragraph
from the first part of the
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Paterson
ber { 1790. G Washington

EXECUTIVE PATRONAGE AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

FROM A SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE NATIONAL REPUBLICAN CONVENTION HELD AT WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS, OCTOBER 12, 1832

THE same party selfishness which drives good men out of office will push bad men in. Political proscription leads necessarily to the filling of offices with incompetent persons, and to a consequent mal-execution of official duties. And in my opinion, Sir, this principle of claiming a monopoly of office by the right of conquest, unless the public shall effectually rebuke and restrain it, will entirely change the character of our government. It elevates party above country; it forgets the common weal in the pursuit of personal emolument; it tends to form, it does form, we see that it has formed, a political combination, united by no common principles or opinions among its members, either upon the powers of the government, or the true policy of the country; but held together simply as an association, under the charm of a popular head; seeking to maintain possession of the government by a vigorous exercise of its patronage; and for this purpose agitating, and alarming, and distressing social life by the exercise of a tyrannical party proscription. Sir, if this course of things cannot be checked, good men will grow tired of the exercise of

political privileges. They will have nothing to do with popular elections. They will see that such elections are but a mere selfish contest for office ; and they will abandon the government to the scramble of the bold, the daring, and the desperate.

THE PRESIDENTIAL PROTEST

FROM A SPEECH DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE
UNITED STATES, MAY 7, 1834, ON THE SUBJECT OF THE
PRESIDENT'S PROTEST AGAINST THE RESOLUTION
OF THE SENATE OF MARCH 28, 1834 ¹

It was strongly and forcibly urged, yesterday, by the honorable member from South Carolina, that the true and only mode of preserving any balance of power, in mixed governments, is to keep an exact balance. This is very true, and to this end encroachment must be resisted at the first step. The question is, therefore, whether, upon the true principles of the Constitution, this exercise of power by the President can be justified. Whether the consequences be prejudicial or not, if there be an illegal exercise of power, it is to be resisted in the proper manner. Even if no harm or inconvenience result from transgressing the boundary, the intrusion is not to be suffered to pass unnoticed. Every encroachment, great or small, is important enough to awaken the attention of those who are intrusted with

¹ President Jackson, although Congress had refused to take his recommendation to order the removal of public moneys from the Bank of the United States, after his re-election in 1832 assumed the responsibility of removing them himself, — or rather of ordering the cessation of government deposits in the bank, — on the grounds that the charter of the bank would soon expire ; that it was virtually insolvent ; and that it was a political engine. The Senate passed resolutions, proposed by Henry Clay, in condemnation of the President's act, which was declared unconstitutional. To these resolutions the President replied in the Protest mentioned in Mr. Webster's speech.

the preservation of a constitutional government. We are not to wait till great public mischiefs come, till the government is overthrown, or liberty itself put into extreme jeopardy. We should not be worthy sons of our fathers were we so to regard great questions affecting the general freedom. Those fathers accomplished the Revolution on a strict question of principle. The Parliament of Great Britain asserted a right to tax the Colonies in all cases whatsoever; and it was precisely on this question that they made the Revolution turn. The amount of taxation was trifling, but the claim itself was inconsistent with liberty; and that was, in their eyes, enough. It was against the recital of an act of Parliament, rather than against any suffering under its enactments, that they took up arms. They went to war against a preamble. They fought seven years against a declaration. They poured out their treasures and their blood like water, in a contest against an assertion which those less sagacious and not so well schooled in the principles of civil liberty would have regarded as barren phraseology, or mere parade of words. They saw in the claim of the British Parliament a seminal principle of mischief, the germ of unjust power; they detected it, dragged it forth from underneath its plausible disguises, struck at it; nor did it elude either their steady eye or their well-directed blow till they had extirpated and destroyed it, to the smallest fibre. On this question of principle, while actual suffering was yet afar off, they raised their flag against a power, to which, for purposes of foreign conquest and subjugation, Rome, in the height of her glory, is not to be compared; a power which has dotted over the surface of the whole globe with her possessions and military posts, whose morning drum-beat, follow-

**The great
cause of the
Revolution.**

ing the sun, and keeping company with the hours, circles the earth with one continuous and unbroken strain of the martial airs of England.

Mr. President, the executive claim of power is exactly this, that the President may keep the money of the public in whatever bank he chooses, on whatever terms he chooses, and apply the sums **Presidential power.** which these banks are willing to pay for its use to whatever purposes he chooses. These sums are not to come into the general treasury. They are to be appropriated before they get there; they are never to be brought under the control of Congress; they are to be paid to officers and agents not known to the law, not nominated to the Senate, and responsible to nobody but the executive itself. I ask gentlemen if all this be lawful. Are they prepared to defend it? Will they stand up and justify it? In my opinion, Sir, it is a clear and most dangerous assumption of power. It is the creation of office without law; the appointment to office without consulting the Senate; the establishment of a salary without law; and the payment of that salary out of a fund which itself is derived from the use of the public treasures. This, Sir, is my other reason for concurring in the vote of the 28th of March;



Andrew Jackson.

and on these grounds I leave the propriety of that vote, so far as I am concerned with it, to be judged of by the country.

But, Sir, the President denies the power of the Senate to pass any such resolution, on any ground whatever.

**The rights of
the Senate.**

Suppose the declaration contained in the resolution to be true; suppose the President had, in fact, assumed powers not granted to him; does the Senate possess the right to declare its opinion, affirming this fact, or does it not? I maintain that the Senate does possess such a power; the President denies it.

Mr. President, we need not look far, nor search deep, for the foundation of this right in the Senate. It is close at hand, and clearly visible. In the first place, it is the right of self-defence. In the second place, it is a right founded on the duty of representative bodies, in a free government, to defend the public liberty against encroachment. We must presume that the Senate honestly entertained the opinion expressed in the resolution of the 28th of March; and, entertaining that opinion, its right to express it is but the necessary consequence of its right to defend its own constitutional authority, as one branch of the government. This is its clear right, and this, too, is its imperative duty.

Mr. President, I know not who wrote this Protest, but I confess I am astonished, truly astonished, as well at the want of knowledge which it displays of constitutional law, as at the high and dangerous pretensions which it puts forth. Neither branch of the legislature can express censure upon the President's conduct! Suppose, Sir, that we should see him enlisting troops and raising an army, can we say nothing, and do nothing? Suppose he were to declare war against a

foreign power, and put the army and the fleet in action; are we still to be silent? Suppose we should see him borrowing money on the credit of the United States; are we yet to wait for impeachment? Indeed, Sir, in regard to this borrowing money on the credit of the United States, I wish to call the attention of the Senate, not only to what might happen, but to what has actually happened. We are informed that the Post-Office Department, a department over which the President claims the same control as over the rest, has actually borrowed near half a million of money on the credit of the United States.

Mr. President, the first power granted to Congress by the Constitution is the power to lay taxes; the second, the power to borrow money on the credit of the United States. Now, Sir, where does the executive find its authority, in or through any department, to borrow money without authority of Congress? This proceeding appears to me wholly illegal, and reprehensible in a very high degree. It may be said that it is not true that this money is borrowed on the credit of the United States, but that it is borrowed on the credit of the Post-Office Department. But that would be mere evasion. The department is but a name. It is an office, and nothing more. The banks have not lent this money to any officer. If Congress should abolish the whole department to-morrow, would the banks not expect the United States to replace this borrowed money? The money, then, is borrowed on the credit of the United States, an act which Congress alone is competent to authorize. If the Post-Office Department may borrow money, so may the War Department and the Navy Department. If half a million may be borrowed, ten millions may be borrowed.

**Executive
usurpation
of power of
Congress.**

What, then, if this transaction shall be justified, is to hinder the executive from borrowing money to maintain fleets and armies, or for any other purpose, at his pleasure, without any authority of law? Yet even this, according to the doctrine of the Protest, we have no right to complain of. We have no right to declare that an executive department has violated the Constitution and broken the law, by borrowing money on the credit of the United States. Nor could we make a similar declaration if we were to see the executive, by means of this borrowed money, enlisting armies and equipping fleets. And yet, Sir, the President has found no difficulty, heretofore, in expressing his opinions, in a paper not called for by the exercise of any official duty, upon the conduct and proceedings of the two houses of Congress. At the commencement of this session, he sent us a message, commenting on the land bill which the two houses passed at the end of the last session. That bill he had not approved, nor had he returned it with objections. Congress was dissolved; and the bill, therefore, was completely dead, and could not be revived. No communication from him could have the least possible effect as an official act. Yet he saw fit to send a message on the subject, and in that message he very freely declares his opinion that the bill which had passed both houses began with an entire subversion of every one of the compacts by which the United States became possessed of their Western domain; that one of its provisions was in direct and undisguised violation of the pledge given by Congress to the States; that the Constitution provides that these compacts shall be untouched by the legislative power, which can only make needful rules and regulations; and that all beyond that is an assumption of undelegated power.

It is in vain that the Protest attempts to shift the resolution to the judicial character of the Senate. The case is too plain for such an argument to be plausible. But, in order to lay some foundation for it, the Protest, as I have already said, contends that neither the Senate nor the House of Representatives can express its opinions on the conduct of the President, except in some form connected with impeachment; so that if the power of impeachment did not exist, these two houses, though they be representative bodies, though one of them be filled by the immediate representatives of the people, though they be constituted like other popular and representative bodies, could not utter a syllable, although they saw the executive either trampling on their own rights and privileges, or grasping at absolute authority and dominion over the liberties of the country! Sir, I hardly know how to speak of such claims of impunity for executive encroachment. I am amazed that any American citizen should draw up a paper containing such lofty pretensions; pretensions which would have been met with scorn in England, at any time since the Revolution of 1688. A man who should stand up, in either house of the British Parliament, to maintain that the house could not, by vote or resolution, maintain its own rights and privileges, would make even the Tory benches hang their heads for very shame.

Right of
freedom
of debate.

When this and the other house shall lose the freedom of speech and debate; when they shall surrender the rights of publicly and freely canvassing all important measures of the executive; when they shall not be allowed to maintain their own authority and their own privileges by vote, declaration, or resolution, — they will then be no longer free representatives of a free people,

but slaves themselves, and fit instruments to make slaves of others.

The Protest, Mr. President, concedes what it doubtless regards as a liberal right of discussion to the people themselves. But its language, even in acknowledging this right of the people to discuss the conduct of their servants, is qualified and peculiar. The free people of the United States, it declares, have an undoubted right to discuss the official conduct of the President in such language and form as they may think proper, "subject only to the restraints of truth and justice." But, then, who is to be judge of this truth and justice? Are the people to judge for themselves, or are others to judge for them? The Protest is here speaking of political rights, and not moral rights; and if restraints are imposed on political rights, it must follow, of course, that others are to decide whenever the case arises whether these restraints have been violated. It is strange that the writer of the Protest did not perceive that, by using this language, he was pushing the President into a direct avowal of the doctrines of 1798. The text of the Protest and the text of the obnoxious act¹ of that year are nearly identical.

But, Sir, if the people have a right to discuss the official conduct of the executive, so have their representatives. We have been taught to regard a representative of the people as a sentinel on the watch-tower of liberty. Is he to be blind, though visible danger approaches? Is he to be deaf, though sounds of peril fill the air? Is he to be dumb, while a thousand duties impel him to raise the cry of alarm? Is he not, rather, to catch the lowest whisper which breathes intention or

¹ Commonly called the Sedition Act, approved 14th July, 1798. See note on page 153.

purpose of encroachment on the public liberties, and to give his voice breath and utterance at the first appearance of danger? Is not his eye to traverse the whole horizon with the keen and eager vision of an unhooded hawk, detecting, through all disguises, every enemy advancing, in any form, towards the citadel which he guards? Sir, this watchfulness for public liberty; this duty of foreseeing danger and proclaiming it; this promptitude and boldness in resisting attacks on the Constitution from any quarter; this defence of established landmarks; this fearless resistance of whatever would transcend or remove them, —all belong to the representative character, are interwoven with its very nature. If deprived of them, an active, intelligent, faithful agent of the people will be converted into an unresisting and passive instrument of power. A representative body, which gives up these rights and duties, gives itself up. It is a representative body no longer. It has broken the tie between itself and its constituents, and henceforth is fit only to be regarded as an inert, self-sacrificed mass, from which all appropriate principle of vitality has departed forever.

Watchfulness for public liberty.

The first object of a free people is the preservation of their liberty; and liberty is only to be preserved by maintaining constitutional restraints and just divisions of political power. Nothing is more deceptive or more dangerous than the pretence of a desire to simplify government. The simplest governments are despotisms; the next simplest, limited monarchies; but all republics, all governments of law, must impose numerous limitations and qualifications of authority, and give many positive and

The preservation of constitutional liberty.

many qualified rights. In other words, they must be subject to rule and regulation. This is the very essence of free political institutions. The spirit of liberty is, indeed, a bold and fearless spirit: but it is also a sharp-sighted spirit, it is a cautious, sagacious, discriminating, far-seeing intelligence; it is jealous of encroachment, jealous of power, jealous of man. It demands checks; it seeks for guards; it insists on securities; it intrenches itself behind strong defences, and fortifies itself with all possible care against the assaults of ambition and passion. It does not trust the amiable weaknesses of human nature, and therefore it will not permit power to overstep its prescribed limits, though benevolence, good intent, and patriotic purpose come along with it. Neither does it satisfy itself with flashy and temporary resistance to illegal authority. Far otherwise. It seeks for duration and permanence. It looks before and after; and, building on the experience of ages which are past, it labors diligently for the benefit of ages to come. This is the nature of constitutional liberty; and this is *our* liberty, if we will rightly understand and preserve it. Every free government is necessarily complicated, because all such governments establish restraints, as well on the power of government itself as on that of individuals. If we will abolish the distinction of branches, and have but one branch; if we will abolish jury trials, and leave all to the judge; if we will then ordain that the legislator shall himself be that judge; and if we will place the executive power in the same hands, we may readily simplify government. We may easily bring it to the simplest of all possible forms, a pure despotism. But a separation of departments, so far as practicable, and the preservation of clear lines of division between them, is the fundamental idea in the

creation of all our constitutions; and, doubtless, the continuance of regulated liberty depends on maintaining these boundaries.

Mr. President, the contest, for ages, has been to rescue Liberty from the grasp of executive power. Whoever has engaged in her sacred cause, from the days of the downfall of those great aristocracies which had stood between the king and the people to the time of our own independence, has struggled for the accomplishment of that single object. On the long list of the champions of human freedom, there is not one name dimmed by the reproach of advocating the extension of executive authority; on the contrary, the uniform and steady purpose of all such champions has been to limit and restrain it. To this end the spirit of liberty, growing more and more enlightened and more and more vigorous from age to age, has been battering, for centuries, against the solid buttments of the feudal system. To this end, all that could be gained from the imprudence, snatched from the weakness, or wrung from the necessities of crowned heads, has been carefully gathered up, secured, and hoarded, as the rich treasures, the very jewels of liberty. To this end, popular and representative right has kept up its warfare against prerogative, with various success; sometimes writing the history of a whole age in blood, sometimes witnessing the martyrdom of Sidneys and Russells,¹ often baffled and repulsed, but still gaining, on the whole,

The danger
of executive
power.

¹ Algernon Sidney (1622-1683), an English republican, executed for alleged treason under Charles II.; as was Lord William Russell (1639-1683), a determined opponent of the right of the Duke of York, afterwards James II., to succeed to the crown. These executions did much to cause the banishment of James II. and the Stuart house in 1689.

and holding what it gained with a grasp which nothing but the complete extinction of its own being could compel it to relinquish. At length, the great conquest over executive power, in the leading western States of Europe, has been accomplished. The feudal system, like other stupendous fabrics of past ages, is known only by the rubbish which it has left behind it. Crowned heads

**The people
versus
prerogative.** have been compelled to submit to the restraints of law, and the *people*, with that intelligence and that spirit which make their voice resistless, have been able to say to prerogative, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther." I need hardly say, Sir, that into the full enjoyment of all which Europe has reached only through such slow and painful steps we sprang at once, by the Declaration of Independence, and by the establishment of free representative governments; governments borrowing more or less from the models of other free States, but strengthened, secured, improved in their symmetry, and deepened in their foundation, by those great men of our own country whose names will be as familiar to future times as if they were written on the arch of the sky.

Through all this history of the contest for liberty, executive power has been regarded as a lion which must be caged. So far from being the object of enlightened popular trust, so far from being considered the natural protector of popular right, it has been dreaded, uniformly, always dreaded, as the great source of its danger.

I do not wish, Sir, to impair the power of the President as it stands written down in the Constitution, and as great and good men have hitherto exercised it. In this, as in other respects, I am for the Constitution as it is. But I will not acquiesce in the reversal of all

just ideas of government; I will not degrade the character of popular representation; I will not blindly confide, where all experience admonishes me to be jealous; I will not trust executive power, vested in the hands of a single magistrate, to be the guardian of liberty.

THE NECESSITY OF UPHOLDING THE CONSTITUTION

FROM A SPEECH DELIVERED IN NEW YORK, MARCH 15, 1837

LOOKING over our whole country, comprehending in our survey the Atlantic coast, with its thick population, its advanced agriculture, its extended commerce, its manufactures and mechanic arts, its varieties of communication, its wealth, and its general improvements; and looking, then, to the interior, to the immense tracts of fresh, fertile, and cheap lands, bounded by so many lakes, and watered by so many magnificent rivers, let me ask if such a map was ever before presented to the eye of any statesman, as the theatre for the exercise of his wisdom and patriotism? And let me ask, too, if any man is fit to act a part, on such a theatre, who does not comprehend the whole of it within the scope of his policy, and embrace it all as his country?

Again, Gentlemen, we are one in respect to the glorious Constitution under which we live. We are all
A common political fate for Americans. united in the great brotherhood of American liberty. Descending from the same ancestors, bred in the same school, taught in infancy to imbibe the same general political sentiments, Americans all, by birth, education, and principle, what but a narrow mind, or woful ignorance, or besotted selfishness, or prejudice ten times blinded, can lead any of us to regard the citizens of any part of the country as strangers and aliens?

Necessity of Upholding the Constitution 283

The solemn truth, moreover, is before us, that a common political fate attends us all.

Under the present Constitution, wisely and conscientiously administered, all are safe, happy, and renowned. The measure of our country's fame may fill all our breasts. It is fame enough for us all to partake in her glory, if we will carry her character onward to its true destiny. But if the system is broken, its fragments must fall alike on all. Not only the cause of American liberty, but the grand cause of liberty throughout the whole earth, depends, in a great measure, on upholding the Constitution and Union of these States. If shattered and destroyed, no matter by what cause, the peculiar and cherished idea of United American Liberty will be no more forever. There may be free States, it is possible, when there shall be separate States. There may be many loose, and feeble, and hostile confederacies, where there is now one great and united confederacy. But the noble idea of United American Liberty, of *our* liberty, such as our fathers established it, will be extinguished forever. Fragments and shattered columns of the edifice may be found remaining; and melancholy and mournful ruins will they be. The august temple itself will be prostrate in the dust. Gentlemen, the citizens of this republic cannot sever their fortunes. A common fate awaits us. In the honor of upholding, or in the disgrace of undermining the Constitution, we shall all necessarily partake. Let us then stand by the Constitution as it is, and by our country as it is, one, united, and entire; let it be a truth engraven on our hearts, let it be borne on the flag under which we rally, in every exigency, that we have ONE COUNTRY, ONE CONSTITUTION, ONE DESTINY.

THE CREDIT SYSTEM AND THE LABOR OF THE UNITED STATES

FROM THE SECOND SPEECH ON THE SUB-TREASURY,
DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
MARCH 12, 1838

Now, Mr. President, what I understand by the credit system is that which connects labor and capital, by giving to labor the use of capital. In other words, intelligence, good character, and good morals bestow on those who have not capital a power, a trust, a confidence, which enables them to obtain it, and to employ it usefully for themselves and others. These active men of business build their hopes of success on their attentiveness, their economy, and their integrity. A wider theatre for useful activity is under their feet, and around them, than was ever open to the young and enterprising generations of men, on any other spot enlightened by the sun. Before them is the ocean. Everything in that direction invites them to efforts of enterprise and industry in the pursuits of commerce and the fisheries. Around them, on all hands, are thriving and prosperous manufactures, an improving agriculture, and the daily presentation of new objects of internal improvement; while behind them is almost half a continent of the richest land, at the cheapest prices, under healthful climates, and washed by the most magnificent rivers that on any part of the globe pay their homage to the

sea. In the midst of all these glowing and glorious prospects, they are neither restrained by ignorance, nor smitten down by the penury of personal circumstances. They are not compelled to contemplate, in hopelessness and despair, all the advantages thus bestowed on their condition by Providence. Capital they may have little or none, but Credit supplies its place; not as the refuge of the prodigal and the reckless; not as gratifying present wants with the certainty of future absolute ruin; but as the genius of honorable trust and confidence; as the blessing voluntarily offered to good character and to good conduct; as the beneficent agent which assists honesty and enterprise in obtaining comfort and independence.

Mr. President, take away this credit, and what remains? I do not ask what remains to the few, but to the many? Take away this system of credit, and then tell me what is left for labor and industry, but mere manual toil and daily drudgery? If we adopt a system that withdraws capital from active employment, do we not diminish the rate of wages? If we curtail the general business of society, does not every laboring man find his condition grow daily worse? In the politics of the day, Sir, we hear much said about divorcing the government from the banks; but when we abolish credit, we shall divorce labor from capital; and depend upon it, Sir, when we divorce labor from capital, capital is hoarded, and labor starves.

The relations
between
labor and
capital.

The declaration so often quoted, that "all who trade on borrowed capital ought to break," is the most aristocratic sentiment ever uttered in this country. It is a sentiment which, if carried out by political arrangement, would condemn the great majority of mankind to the

perpetual condition of mere day-laborers. It tends to take away from them all that solace and hope which arise from possessing something which they can call their own. A man loves his own; it is fit and natural that he should do so; and he will love his country and its institutions, if he have some stake in that country, although it be but a very small part of the general mass of property. If it be but a cottage, an acre, a garden, its possession raises him, gives him self-respect, and strengthens his attachment to his native land. It is our happy condition, by the blessing of Providence, that almost every man of sound health, industrious habits, and good morals, can ordinarily attain, at least, to this degree of comfort and respectability; and it is a result devoutly to be wished, both for its individual and its general consequences.

But even to this degree of acquisition that credit of which I have already said so much is highly important, since its general effect is to raise the price of wages, and render industry productive. There is no condition so low, if it be attended with industry and economy, that it is not benefited by credit, as any one will find, if he will examine and follow out its operations.

Sir, if there be any aristocrats in Massachusetts, the people are all aristocrats: because I do not believe there is on earth, in a highly civilized society, a greater equality in the condition of men than exists there. If there be a man in the State who maintains what is called an equipage, has servants in livery, or drives four horses in his coach, I am not acquainted with him. On the other hand, there are few who are not able to carry their wives and daughters to church in some decent conveyance. It is no matter

Equality
in Massa-
chusetts.

of regret or sorrow to us that few are very rich; but it is our pride and glory that few are very poor. It is our still higher pride, and our just boast, as I think, that all her citizens possess means of intelligence and education; and that, of all her productions, she reckons among the very chiefest those which spring from the culture of the mind and the heart.

Mr. President, one of the most striking characteristics of this age is the extraordinary progress which it has witnessed in popular knowledge. A new and powerful impulse has been acting in the social system of late, producing this effect in a most remarkable degree. In morals, in politics, in art, in literature, there is a vast accession to the number of readers and to the number of proficient. The present state of popular knowledge is not the result of a slow and uniform progress, proceeding through a lapse of years, with the same regular degree of motion. It is evidently the result of some new causes, brought into powerful action, and producing their consequences rapidly and strikingly. What, Sir, are these causes?

This is not an occasion, Sir, for discussing such a question at length; allow me to say, however, that the improved state of popular knowledge is but the necessary result of the improved condition of the great mass of the people. Knowledge is not one of our merely physical wants. Life may be sustained without it. But, in order to live, men must be fed and clothed and sheltered; and in a state of things in which one's whole labor can do no more than procure clothes, food, and shelter, he can have no time nor means for mental improvement. Knowledge, therefore, is not attained, and cannot be attained, till there is some degree of respite from daily manual toil and never-ending drudgery.

Progress in
popular
knowledge.

Whenever a less degree of labor will produce the absolute necessities of life, then there come leisure and means both to teach and to learn.

If this great and wonderful extension of popular knowledge be the result of an improved condition, it may, in the next place, well be asked, What are the causes which have thus suddenly produced that great improvement? How is it that the means of food, clothing, and shelter are now so much more cheaply and abundantly procured than formerly? Sir, the main cause I take to be the progress of scientific art, or a new extension of the application of science to art. This it is which has so much distinguished the last half-century in Europe and in America, and its effects are everywhere visible, and especially among us. Man has found new allies and auxiliaries in the powers of nature and in the inventions of mechanism.

The general doctrine of political economy is, that wealth consists in whatever is useful or convenient to man, and that labor is the producing cause of all this wealth. This is very true. But, then, what is labor? In the sense of political writers, and in common language, it means human industry; in a philosophical view, it may receive a much more comprehensive meaning. It is not, in that view, human toil only, the mere action of thews and muscles; but it is any active agency which, working upon the materials with which the world is supplied, brings forth products useful or convenient to man. The materials of wealth are in the earth, in the seas, and in their natural and unaided productions. Labor obtains these materials, works upon them, and fashions them to human use. Now it has been the object of scientific art, or of the application of science to art, to increase this active

agency, to augment its power, by creating millions of laborers in the form of machines all but automatic, all to be diligently employed and kept at work by the force of natural powers. To this end these natural powers, principally those of steam and falling water, are subsidized and taken into human employment. Spinning-machines, power-looms, and all the mechanical devices, acting, among other operatives, in the factories and workshops, are but so many laborers. They are usually denominated *labor-saving* machines, but it would be more just to call them *labor-dòing* machines. They are made to be active agents; to have motion, and to produce effect; and though without intelligence, they are guided by laws of science which are exact and perfect, and they produce results, therefore, in general, more accurate than the human hand is capable of producing. When we look upon one of these, we behold a mute fellow-laborer, of immense power, of mathematical exactness, and of ever-during and unwearied effort. And while he is thus a most skilful and productive laborer, he is a non-consumer, at least beyond the wants of his mechanical being. He is not clamorous for food, raiment, or shelter, and makes no demands for the expenses of education. The eating and drinking, the reading and writing, and the clothes-wearing world, are benefited by the labors of these co-operatives, in the same way as if Providence had provided for their service millions of beings, like ourselves in external appearance, able to labor and to toil, and yet requiring little or nothing for their own consumption or subsistence; or, rather, as if Providence had created a race of giants, each of whom, demanding no more for his support and consumption than a common laborer, should yet be able to perform the work of a hundred.

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Now, Sir, turn back to the Massachusetts tables of production, and you will see that it is these automatic allies and co-operators, and these powers of nature, thus employed and placed under human direction, which have come, with such prodigious effect, to man's aid, in the great business of procuring the means of living, of comfort, and of wealth, and which have so swollen the products of her skilful industry. Look at these tables once more, Sir, and you will see the effects of labor, united with and acting upon capital. Look yet again, and you will see that credit, mutual trust, prompt and punctual dealings, and commercial confidence, are all mixed up as indispensable elements in the general sytem.

I will ask you to look yet once more, Sir, and you will perceive that general competence, great equality in human condition, a degree of popular knowledge and intelligence nowhere surpassed, if anywhere equalled, the prevalence of good moral sentiment, and extraordinary general prosperity, are the result of the whole. Sir, I have done with Massachusetts. I do not praise the old "Bay State" of the Revolution; I only present her as she is.

Mr. President, such is the state of things actually existing in the country, and of which I have now given you a sample. And yet there are persons who constantly clamor against this state of things. They call it aristocracy. They excite the poor to make war upon the rich, while in truth they know not who are either rich or poor. They complain of oppression, speculation, and the pernicious influence of accumulated wealth. They cry out loudly against all banks and corporations, and all the means by which small capitals become united, in order to produce

Demoralizing enemies of established institutions.

important and beneficial results. They carry on a mad hostility against all established institutions. They would choke up the fountains of industry, and dry all its streams.

In a country of unbounded liberty, they clamor against oppression. In a country of perfect equality, they would move heaven and earth against privilege and monopoly. In a country where property is more equally divided than anywhere else, they rend the air with the shouting of agrarian doctrines. In a country where the wages of labor are high beyond all parallel, and where lands are cheap, and the means of living low, they would teach the laborer that he is but an oppressed slave. Sir, what can such men want? What do they mean? They can want nothing, Sir, but to enjoy the fruits of other men's labor. They can mean nothing but disturbance and disorder, the diffusion of corrupt principles, and the destruction of the moral sentiments and moral habits of society. A licentiousness of feeling and of action is sometimes produced by prosperity itself. Men cannot always resist the temptation to which they are exposed by the very abundance of the bounties of Providence, and the very happiness of their own condition; as the steed, full of the pasture, will sometimes throw himself against its enclosures, break away from its confinement, and, feeling now free from needless restraint, betake himself to the moors and barrens, where want, ere long, brings him to his senses, and starvation and death close his career.

THE POLITICAL COURSE OF MR. CALHOUN

FROM THE SECOND SPEECH ON THE SUB-TREASURY, DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, MARCH 12, 1838

SIR, the spirit of union is particularly liable to temptation and seduction in moments of peace and prosperity. In war, this spirit is strengthened by a sense of common danger, and by a thousand recollections of ancient efforts and ancient glory in a common cause. But in the calms of a long peace, and in the absence of all apparent causes of alarm, things near gain an ascendancy over things remote. Local interests and feelings overshadow national sentiments. Our attention, our regard, and our attachment are every moment solicited to what touches us closest, and we feel less and less the attraction of a distant orb. Such tendencies we are bound by true patriotism and by our love of union to resist. This is our duty: and the moment, in my judgment, has arrived, when that duty should be performed. We hear, every day, sentiments and arguments which would become a meeting of envoys, employed by separate governments, more than they become the common legislature of a united country. Constant appeals are made to local interests, to geographical distinctions, and to the policy and the pride of particular States. It would sometimes appear as if it were a settled purpose to convince the people that

Is the
American
Union a
discordant
jumble?

The Political Course of Mr. Calhoun 293

our Union is nothing but a jumble of different and discordant interests, which must, ere long, be all resolved into their original state of separate existence; as if, therefore, it was of no great value while it should last, and was not likely to last long. The process of disintegration begins by urging as a fact the existence of different interests.

Sir, is not the end to which all this leads us obvious? Who does not see that, if convictions of this kind take possession of the public mind, our Union Calhoun's course a danger to the Union. can hereafter be nothing, while it remains, but a connection without harmony; a bond without affection; a theatre for the angry contests of local feelings, local objects, and local jealousies? Even while it continues to exist in name, it may by these means become nothing but the mere form of a united government. My children, and the children of those who sit around me, may meet, perhaps, in this chamber, in the next generation; but if tendencies now but too obvious be not checked, they will meet as strangers and aliens. They will feel no sense of common interest or common country; they will cherish no common object of patriotic love. If the same Saxon language shall fall from their lips, it may be the chief proof that they belong to the same nation. Its vital principle exhausted and gone, its power of doing good terminated, the Union itself, become productive only of strife and contention, must ultimately fall, dishonored and unlamented.

The honorable member from Carolina himself habitually indulges in charges of usurpation and oppression against the government of his country. He daily denounces its important measures, in the language in which our Revolutionary fathers spoke of the oppressions of the mother country. Not merely against execu-

tive usurpation, either real or supposed, does he utter these sentiments, but against laws of Congress, laws passed by large majorities, laws sanctioned for a course of years by the people. These laws he proclaims, every hour, to be but a series of acts of oppression. He speaks of them as if it were an admitted fact that such is their true character. This is the language he utters, these are the sentiments he expresses, to the rising generation around him. Are they sentiments and language which are likely to inspire our children with the love of union, to enlarge their patriotism, or to teach them, and to make them feel, that their destiny has made them common citizens of one great and glorious republic? A principal object in his late political movements, the gentleman himself tells us, was to *unite the entire South*; and against whom, or against what, does he wish to unite the entire South? Is not this the very essence of local feeling and local regard? Is it not the acknowledgment of a wish and object to create political strength by uniting political opinions geographically? While the gentleman thus wishes to unite the entire South, I pray to know, Sir, if he expects me to turn toward the polar star, and, acting on the same principle, to utter a cry of Rally! to the whole North? Heaven forbid! To the day of my death, neither he nor others shall hear such a cry from me.

Finally, the honorable member declares that he shall now march off, under the banner of State rights! March off from whom? March off from what? We **State rights.** have been contending for great principles. We have been struggling to maintain the liberty and to restore the prosperity of the country; we have made these struggles here, in the national councils, with the old flag, the true American flag, the Eagle, and the

Stars and Stripes, waving over the chamber in which we sit. He now tells us, however, that he marches off under the State-rights banner!

Let him go. I remain. I am where I ever have been, and ever mean to be. Here, standing on the platform of the general Constitution, a platform broad enough and firm enough to uphold every interest of the whole country, I shall still be found. Intrusted with some part in the administration of that Constitution, I intend to act in its spirit, and in the spirit of those who framed it. Yes, Sir, I would act as if our fathers, who formed it for us and who bequeathed it to us, were looking on me; as if I could see their venerable forms bending down to behold us from the abodes above. I would act, too, as if the eye of posterity was gazing on me.

The Constitution broad enough to uphold every interest.

Standing thus, as in the full gaze of our ancestors and our posterity, having received this inheritance from the former, to be transmitted to the latter, and feeling that if I am born for any good, in my day and generation, it is for the good of the whole country, no local policy or local feeling, no temporary impulse, shall induce me to yield my foothold on the Constitution of the Union. I move off under no banner not known to the whole American people, and to their Constitution and laws. No, Sir; these walls, these columns,

“shall fly

From their firm base as soon as I.”¹

I came into public life, Sir, in the service of the United States. On that broad altar, my earliest, and all my public vows, have been made. I propose to serve no other master. So far as depends on any agency of

¹ Scott's "Lady of the Lake," canto v. stanza 10.

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mine, they shall continue united States; united in interest and in affection; united in everything in regard to which the Constitution has decreed their union; united in war, for the common defence, the common renown, and the common glory; and united, compacted, knit firmly together in peace, for the common prosperity and happiness of ourselves and our children.

THE AMERICAN NAVY

FROM A SPEECH DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE
UNITED STATES, IN REPLY TO MR. CALHOUN, MARCH
22, 1838

SIR, I do not know when my opinion of the importance of a naval force to the United States had its origin. I can give no date to my present sentiments on this subject, because I never entertained different sentiments. I remember, Sir, that National importance of the navy. immediately after coming into my profession, at a period when the navy was most unpopular, when it was called by all sorts of hard names and designated by many coarse epithets, on one of those occasions on which young men address their neighbors, I ventured to put forth a boy's hand in defence of the navy. I insisted on its importance, its adaptation to our circumstances and to our national character, and its indispensable necessity, if we intended to maintain and extend our commerce. These opinions and sentiments I brought into Congress; and the first time in which I presumed to speak on the topics of the day, I attempted to urge on the House a greater attention to the naval service. There were divers modes of prosecuting the war. On these modes, or on the degree of attention and expense which should be bestowed on each, different men held different opinions. I confess I looked with most hope to the results of naval warfare, and therefore I invoked government to invigorate and strengthen that arm of the national defence. I invoked it to seek its enemy upon the seas, to

go where every auspicious indication pointed, and where the whole heart and soul of the country would go with it.

Sir, we were at war with the greatest maritime power on earth. England had gained an ascendancy on the

**England's
maritime
supremacy.** seas over all the combined powers of Europe. She had been at war twenty years. She had tried her fortunes on the Continent, but generally with no success. At one time the whole Con-

tinent had been closed against her. A long line of armed exterior, an unbroken hostile array, frowned upon her from the Gulf of Archangel, round the promontory of Spain and Portugal, to the extreme point of Italy. There was not a port which an English ship could enter. Everywhere on the land the genius of her great enemy had triumphed. He had defeated armies, crushed coalitions, and overturned thrones; but, like the fabled giant, he was unconquerable only while he touched the land. On the ocean he was powerless. That field of fame was his adversary's, and her meteor flag was streaming in triumph over its whole extent.

To her maritime ascendancy England owed everything, and we were now at war with her. One of the most charming of her poets had said of her, —

“ Her march is o'er the mountain waves,
Her home is on the deep.”¹

Now, Sir, since we were at war with her, I was for intercepting this march; I was for calling upon her, and paying our respects to her, at home; I was for giving her to know that we, too, had a right of way over the seas, and that our marine officers and our sailors were not entire strangers on the bosom of the deep. I was for doing something more with our navy

¹ Campbell's “Ye Mariners of England.”

than keeping it on our own shores, for the protection of our coasts and harbors; I was for giving play to its gallant and burning spirit; for allowing it to go forth upon the seas, and to encounter, on an open and an equal field, whatever the proudest or the bravest of the enemy could bring against it. I knew the character of its officers and the spirit of its seamen; and I knew that, in their hands, though the flag of the country might go down to the bottom, yet, while defended by them, that it could never be dishonored or disgraced.

Webster's
policy for
increased
naval activ-
ity in the
War of 1812.

Since she was our enemy, and a most powerful enemy, I was for touching her, if we could, in the very apple of her eye; for reaching the highest feather in her cap; for clutching at the very brightest jewel in her crown. There seemed to me to be a peculiar propriety in all this, as the war was undertaken for the redress of maritime injuries alone. It was a war declared for free trade and sailors' rights. The ocean, therefore, was the proper theatre for deciding this controversy with our enemy, and on that theatre it was my ardent wish that our own power should be concentrated to the utmost.

So much, Sir, for the war, and for my conduct and opinions as connected with it. And, as I do not mean to recur to this subject often, nor ever, unless indispensably necessary, I repeat the demand for any charge, any accusation, any allegation whatever, that throws me behind the honorable gentleman, or behind any other man, in honor, in fidelity, in devoted love to that country in which I was born, which has honored me, and which I serve. I, who seldom deal in defiance, now, here, in my place, boldly defy the honorable member to put his insinuation in the form of a charge, and to support that charge by any proof whatever.

THE LOG CABIN CANDIDATE

FROM A SPEECH DELIVERED IN SARATOGA, NEW YORK,
AUGUST 12, 1840

It is the cry and effort of the times to stimulate those who are called poor against those who are called rich ; and yet, among those who urge this cry, and seek to profit by it, there is betrayed sometimes an occasional sneer at whatever savors of humble life. Witness the reproach against a candidate now before the people for their highest honors, that a log cabin, with plenty of hard cider, is good enough for him!¹

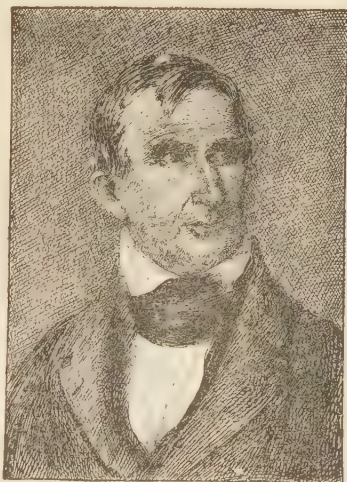
It appears to some persons that a great deal too much use is made of the symbol of the log cabin. No man of sense supposes, certainly, that the having lived in a log cabin is any further proof of qualification for the Presidency, than as it creates a presumption that any one who, rising from humble condition, or under unfavorable circumstances, has been able to attract a considerable degree of public attention, is possessed of reputable qualities, moral and intellectual.

¹ The "Log Cabin and Hard Cider" campaign of 1840, which was probably the most exciting in the political history of the United States, took its name from the rude simplicity of General Harrison's early life on the frontier, in which his home was said to have been a log cabin, and his drink hard cider. His election by a large majority of the electoral vote (234 for Harrison, and only 60 for Van Buren, his opponent) was followed by his death, April 4, 1841, just a month after his inauguration.

But it is to be remembered that this matter of the log cabin originated not with the friends of the Whig candidate but with his enemies. Soon after his nomination at Harrisburg, a writer for one of the leading administration papers spoke of his "log cabin," and his use of "hard cider," by way of sneer and reproach. As might have been expected

William
Henry
Harrison.

(for pretenders are apt to be thrown off their guard), this taunt at humble life proceeded from the party which claims a monopoly of the purest democracy. The whole party appeared to enjoy it, or at least they countenanced it by silent acquiescence; for I do not know that, to this day, any eminent individual or any leading newspaper attached to the administration has rebuked this scornful jeering at the supposed humble condition or circumstances in



William Henry Harrison.

life, past or present, of a worthy man and a war-worn soldier. But it touched a tender point in the public feeling. It naturally roused indignation. What was intended as reproach was immediately seized on as merit. "Be it so! Be it so!" was the instant burst of the public voice. "Let him be the log cabin candidate. What you say in scorn, we will shout with all our lungs. From this day forward, we have our cry of

rally; and we shall see whether he who has dwelt in one of the rude abodes of the West may not become the best house in the country!"

All this is natural, and springs from sources of just feeling. Other things, Gentlemen, have had a similar origin. We all know that the term "Whig"¹ was bestowed in derision, two hundred years ago, on those who were thought too fond of liberty; and our national air of "Yankee Doodle" was composed by British officers, in ridicule of the American troops. Yet, ere long, the last of the British armies laid down its arms at Yorktown, while this same air was playing in the ears of officers and men. Gentlemen, it is only shallow-minded pretenders who either make distinguished origin matter of personal merit, or obscure origin matter of personal reproach. Taunt and scoffing at the humble condition of early life affect nobody, in this country, but those who are foolish enough to indulge in them, and they are generally sufficiently punished by public rebuke. A man who is not ashamed of himself need not be ashamed of his early condition.

Gentlemen, it did not happen to me to be born in a log cabin; but my elder brothers and sisters were born in a log cabin, raised amid the snow-drifts of New Hampshire, at a period so early that, when the smoke first rose from its rude chimney, and curled over the frozen hills, there was no similar evi-

**Origin of
the term
"Whig."**

**Webster's
birthplace.**

¹ The name "Whig" was first used by the opponents of the Democrats, in New York, in 1834-1835, instead of "National Republican," the name they had borne in the administration of John Quincy Adams (1825-1829). It had previously been used by American revolutionists in the eighteenth century; by English Liberals in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (as opposed to Tory or Conservative); by Presbyterians opposed to Charles I. in Scotland; and by Cromwell's followers. Its derivation is obscure.

dence of a white man's habitation between it and the settlements on the rivers of Canada. Its remains still exist. I make to it an annual visit. I carry my children to it, to teach them the hardships endured by the generations which have gone before them. I love to dwell on the tender recollections, the kindred ties, the early affections, and the touching narratives and incidents, which mingle with all I know of this primitive family abode. I weep to think that none of those who inhabited it are now among the living; and if ever I am ashamed of it, or if I ever fail in affectionate veneration for him who reared it, and defended it against savage violence and destruction, cherished all the domestic virtues beneath its roof, and, through the fire and blood of a seven years' revolutionary war, shrunk from no danger, no toil, no sacrifice, to serve his country, and to raise his children to a condition better than his own, may my name and the name of my posterity be blotted forever from the memory of mankind!

EDUCATION THE SECURITY OF AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS

FROM REMARKS AT A PUBLIC RECEPTION BY THE
LADIES OF RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, OCTOBER 5, 1840

It is by the promulgation of sound morals in the community, and more especially by the training and instruction of the young, that woman performs her part towards the preservation of a free government. It is generally admitted that public liberty, and the perpetuity of a free constitution, rest on the virtue and intelligence of the community which enjoys it. How is that virtue to be inspired, and how is that intelligence to be communicated? Bonaparte once asked Madame de Staël in what manner he could best promote the happiness of France. Her reply is full of political wisdom. She said, "Instruct the mothers of the French people." Mothers are, indeed, the affectionate and effective teachers of the human race. The mother begins her process of training with the infant in her arms. It is she who directs, so to speak, its first mental and spiritual pulsations. She conducts it along the impressible years of childhood and youth, and hopes to deliver it to the stern conflicts and tumultuous scenes of life, armed by those good principles which her child has received from maternal care and love.

If we draw within the circle of our contemplation the mothers of a civilized nation, what do we see? We

behold so many artificers working, not on frail and perishable matter, but on the immortal mind, moulding and fashioning beings who are to exist forever. We applaud the artist whose skill and genius present the mimic man upon the canvas; we admire and celebrate the sculptor who works out that same image in enduring marble; but how insignificant are these achievements, though the highest and the fairest in all the departments of art, in comparison with the great vocation of human mothers! They work, not upon the canvas that shall perish, or the marble that shall crumble into dust, but upon mind, upon spirit, which is to last forever, and which is to bear, for good or evil, throughout its duration, the impress of a mother's plastic hand.

I have already expressed the opinion, which all allow to be correct, that our security for the duration of the free institutions which bless our country depends upon habits of virtue and the prevalence of knowledge and of education. The attainment of knowledge does not comprise all which is contained in the larger term of education. The feelings are to be disciplined; the passions are to be restrained; true and worthy motives are to be inspired; a profound religious feeling is to be instilled, and pure morality inculcated, under all circumstances. All this is comprised in education. Mothers who are faithful to this great duty will tell their children that neither in political nor in any other concerns of life can man ever withdraw himself from the perpetual obligations of conscience and of duty; that in every act, whether public or private, he incurs a just responsibility; and that in no condition is he warranted in trifling with important rights and obligations. They will impress upon their children the truth, that the

Education
the security
for the
duration of
American
institutions.

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exercise of the elective franchise is a social duty, of as solemn a nature as man can be called to perform; that a man may not innocently trifle with his vote; that every free elector is a trustee, as well for others as himself; and that every man and every measure he supports has an important bearing on the interests of others, as well as on his own. It is in the inculcation of high and pure morals such as these, that, in a free republic, woman performs her sacred duty, and fulfils her destiny.

A SOUND CURRENCY

FROM A SPEECH AT FANEUIL HALL, BOSTON, SEPTEMBER
30, 1842, AT A PUBLIC RECEPTION GIVEN TO MR. WEB-
STER ON HIS RETURN AFTER THE NEGOTIATION OF
THE TREATY OF WASHINGTON

WE live in an age, fellow-citizens, when there has been established among the nations a more elevated tribunal than ever before existed on earth; I mean the tribunal of the enlightened public opinion of the world. Governments cannot go to war now, either with or against the consent of their own subjects or people, without the reprobation of other States, unless for grounds and reasons justifying them in the general judgment of mankind. The judgment of civilization, of commerce, and of that heavenly light that beams over Christendom, restrains men, congresses, parliaments, princes, and people from gratifying the inordinate love of ambition through the bloody scenes of war. It has been wisely said, and it is true, that every settlement of national differences between Christian states by fair negotiation, without resort to arms, is a new illustration and a new proof of the benign influence of the Christian faith.

Peaceful
settlement
of inter-
national
disputes.

Gentlemen, I hope that I have not manifested through my public life a very overweening confidence in my own judgment, or a very unreasonable unwillingness to accept the views of others. But there are some sub-

jects on which I feel entitled to pay some respect to my own opinion. The subject of currency, Gentlemen, has been the study of my life. Thirty years ago, a little before my entrance into the House of Representatives, the questions connected with a mixed currency, involving the proper relation of paper to specie, and the proper means of restricting an excessive issue of paper, came to be discussed by the most acute and well-disciplined understandings in England in Parliament. At that time, during the suspension of specie payments by the bank, when paper was fifteen per cent below par, Mr. Vansittart had presented his celebrated resolution, declaring that a bank-note was still worth the value expressed on its face; that the bank-note had not depreciated, but that the price of bullion had risen. Lord Liverpool and Lord Castlereagh espoused this view, as we know, and it was opposed by the close reasoning of Huskisson, the powerful logic of Horner, and the practical sagacity and common sense of Alexander Baring, now Lord Ashburton. The study of those debates made me a bullionist. They convinced me that paper could not circulate safely in any country any longer than it was immediately redeemable at the place of its issue. Coming into Congress the very next year, or the next but one after, and finding the finances of the country in a most deplorable condition, I then and ever after devoted myself, in preference to all other public topics, to the consideration of the questions relating to them. I believe I have read everything of value that has been published since on those questions, on either side of the Atlantic. I have studied by close observation the laws of paper currency, as they have exhibited themselves in this and in other countries, from 1811 down to the pres-

The
currency.

Paper
money safe
only when
redeemable.

ent time. I have expressed my opinions at various times in Congress, and some of the predictions which I have made have not been altogether falsified by subsequent events. I must, therefore, be permitted, Gentlemen, without yielding to any flippant newspaper paragraph, or to the hasty ebullitions of debate in a public assembly, to say that I believe the plan for an exchequer, as presented to Congress at its last session, is the *best* measure, the *only* measure for the adoption of Congress and the trial of the people. I am ready to stake my reputation upon it, and that is all that I have to stake. I am ready to stake my reputation, that, if this Whig Congress will take that measure and give it a fair trial, within three years it will be admitted by the whole American people to be the most beneficial measure of any sort ever adopted in this country, the Constitution only excepted.

I mean that they should take it as it was when it came from the Cabinet, not as it looked when the committees of Congress had laid their hands upon it. For when the committees of Congress had struck out the proviso respecting exchange, it was not worth a rush; it was not worth the parchment it would be engrossed upon. The great desire of this country is a general currency, a facility of exchange; a currency which shall be the same for you and for the people of Alabama and Louisiana, and a system of exchange which shall equalize credit between them and you, with the rapidity and facility with which steam conveys men and merchandise.¹ That

**Necessity of
a general
currency for
the whole
country.**

¹ A similarly emphatic assertion of the necessity of a stable and redeemable national currency was made by Mr. Webster in his speech at the reception given him in New York, March 15, 1837, when he said:

"I hold this disturbance of the measure of value, and the means of

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is what the country wants, what you want; and you have not got it. You have not got it, you cannot get it, but by some adequate provision of government.

In my judgment, there remain certain important objects to engage our public and private attention, in the national affairs of the country. These are **Dangers of partisanship.** the settlement of the remaining questions between ourselves and England; the great questions relating to the reciprocity principle; those relating to Colonial trade; the most absorbing questions of the currency, and those relating to the great subject of the restoration of the national character and the public faith; these are all objects to which I am willing to devote myself, both in public and in private life. I do not expect that much of public service remains to be done by me; but I am ready, for the promotion of these objects, to act with sober men of any party, and of all parties. I am ready to act with men who are free from that great danger that surrounds all men of all parties,

payment and exchange, this derangement, and, if I may so say, this violation of the currency, to be one of the most unpardonable of political faults. He who tampers with the currency robs labor of its bread. He panders, indeed, to greedy capital, which is keen-sighted, and may shift for itself; but he beggars labor, which is honest, unsuspecting, and too busy with the present to calculate for the future. The prosperity of the working classes lives, moves, and has its being in established credit, and a steady medium of payment. All sudden changes destroy it. Honest industry never comes in for any part of the spoils in that scramble which takes place when the currency of a country is disordered. Did wild schemes and projects ever benefit the industrious? Did irredeemable bank paper ever enrich the laborious? Did violent fluctuations ever do good to him who depends on his daily labor for his daily bread? Certainly never. All these things may gratify greediness for sudden gain, or the rashness of daring speculation; but they can bring nothing but injury and distress to the homes of patient industry and honest labor."

— the danger that patriotism itself, warmed and heated in party contests, will run into partisanship. I believe that among the sober men of this country there is a growing desire for more moderation of party feeling, more predominance of purely public considerations, more honest and general union of well-meaning men of all sides to uphold the institutions of the country and carry them forward.

In the pursuit of these objects, in public life or in a private station, I am willing to perform the part assigned to me, and to give them, with hearty good-will and zealous effort, all that may remain to me of strength and life.

THE LANDING AT PLYMOUTH

A SPEECH DELIVERED DECEMBER 22, 1843, AT THE
PUBLIC DINNER OF THE NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY OF
NEW YORK, IN COMMEMORATION OF THE LANDING
OF THE PILGRIMS

SIR, I must say a word in connection with that event which we have assembled to commemorate. It has seemed fit to the dwellers in New York, New Englanders by birth or descent, to form this society. They have formed it for the relief of the poor and distressed, and for the purpose of commemorating annually the great event of the settlement of the country from which they spring. It would be great presumption in me to go back to the scene of that settlement, or to attempt to exhibit it in any colors, after the exhibition made to-day; yet it is an event that in all time since, and in all time to come, and more in times to come than in times past, must stand out in great and striking characteristics to the admiration of the world. The sun's return to his winter solstice, in 1620, is the epoch from which he dates his first acquaintance with the small people, now one of the happiest, and destined to be one of the greatest, that his rays fall upon; and his annual visitation, from that day to this, to our frozen region, has enabled him to see that progress, *progress*, was the characteristic of that small people. He has seen them from a handful that one of his beams coming through a key-hole might illuminate, spread over a hemisphere which he cannot

enlighten under the slightest eclipse. Nor, though this globe should revolve round him for tens of hundreds of thousands of years, will he see such another incipient colonization upon any part of this attendant upon his mighty orb. What else he may see in those other planets which revolve around him we cannot tell, at least until we have tried the fifty-foot telescope which Lord Rosse is preparing for that purpose.

There is not, Gentlemen, and we may as well admit it, in any history of the past, another epoch from which so many great events have taken a turn ; events which, while important to us, are equally important to the country from whence we came. The settlement of Plymouth — concurring, I always wish to be understood, with that of Virginia — was the settlement of New England by Colonies of Old England. Now, Gentlemen, take these two ideas and run out the thoughts suggested by both. What has been, and what is to be, Old England? What has been, what is, and what may be, in the providence of God, *New* England, with her neighbors and associates? I would not dwell, Gentlemen, with any particular emphasis upon the sentiment, which I nevertheless entertain, with respect to the great diversity in the races of men. I do not know how far in that respect I might not encroach on those mysteries of Providence which, while I adore, I may not comprehend ; but it does seem to me to be very remarkable, that we may go back to the time when New England, or those who founded it, were *subtracted* from Old England ; and both Old England and New England went on, nevertheless, in their mighty career of progress and power.

A great
historical
epoch.

Let me begin with New England for a moment. What has resulted, — embracing, as I say, the nearly

contemporaneous settlement of Virginia, — what has resulted from the planting upon this continent of two or three slender colonies from the mother country? Gentlemen, the great epitaph commemorative of the character and the worth, the discoveries and glory, of Columbus, was that he had *given a new world to the crowns of Castile and Aragon*. Gentlemen, this is a great mistake. It does not come up at all to the great merits of Columbus. He gave the territory of the southern hemisphere to the crowns of Castile and Aragon; but as a place for the plantation of colonies, as a place for the habitation of men, as a place to which laws and religion and manners and science were to be transferred, as a place in which the creatures of God should multiply and fill the earth, under friendly skies and with religious hearts, he gave it to the whole world, he gave it to universal man! From this seminal principle, and from a handful, a hundred saints, blessed of God and ever honored of men, landed on the shores of Plymouth and elsewhere along the coast, united, as I have said already more than once, in the process of time, with the settlement at Jamestown, has sprung this great people of which we are a portion.

Rapid increase in population. I do not reckon myself among quite the oldest of the land, and yet it so happens that very recently I recurred to an exulting speech or oration of my own, in which I spoke of my country as consisting of nine millions of people. I could hardly persuade myself that within the short time which had elapsed since that epoch our population had doubled; and that at the present moment there does exist most unquestionably as great a probability of its continued progress, in the same ratio, as has ever existed in any



previous time. I do not know whose imagination is fertile enough, I do not know whose conjectures, I may almost say, are wild enough to tell what may be the progress of wealth and population in the United States in half a century to come. All we know is, here is a people of from seventeen to twenty millions, intelligent, educated, freeholders, freemen, republicans, possessed of all the means of modern improvement, modern science, arts, literature, with the world before them! There is nothing to check them till they touch the shores of the Pacific, and then, they are so much accustomed to water, that *that's* a facility, and no obstruction!

So much, Gentlemen, for this branch of the English race; but what has happened, meanwhile, to England herself since the period of the departure of the Puritans from the coast of Lincolnshire, from the English Boston? Gentlemen, in speaking of the progress of English power, of English dominion and authority, from that period to the present, I shall be understood, of course, as neither entering into any defence or¹ any accusation of the policy which has conducted her to her present state. As to the justice of her wars, the necessity of her conquests, the propriety of those acts by which she has taken possession of so great a portion of the globe, it is not the business of the present occasion to inquire. *Neque teneo, neque refello.*² But I speak of them, or intend to speak of them, as facts of the most extraordinary character, unequalled in the history of any nation on the globe, and the consequences of which may and must reach through a thousand generations. The Puritans left England in the

The expansion of England.

¹ Rhetorical infelicities like this are rare in Webster; but the present expression follows the standard text.

² "I neither defend nor confute."

reign of James the First. England herself had then become somewhat settled and established in the Protestant faith, and in the quiet enjoyment of property, by the previous energetic, long, and prosperous reign of Elizabeth. Her successor was James the Sixth of Scotland, now become James the First of England; and here was a union of the crowns, but not of the kingdoms, — a very important distinction. Ireland was held by a military power, and one cannot but see that at that day, whatever may be true or untrue in more recent periods of her history, Ireland was held by England by the two great potencies, the power of the sword and the power of confiscation. In other respects, England was nothing like the England we now behold. Her foreign possessions were quite inconsiderable. She had some hold on the West India Islands; she had Acadia, or Nova Scotia, which King James granted, by wholesale, for the endowment of the knights whom he created by hundreds. And what has been her progress? Did she then possess Gibraltar, the key to the Mediterranean? Did she possess a port in the Mediterranean? Was Malta hers? Were the Ionian Islands hers? Was the southern extremity of Africa, was the Cape of Good Hope, hers? Were the whole of her vast possessions in India hers? Was her great Australian empire hers? While that branch of her population which followed the western star, and under its guidance committed itself to the duty of settling, fertilizing, and peopling an unknown wilderness in the West, were pursuing their destinies, other causes, providential doubtless, were leading English power eastward and southward, in consequence and by means of her naval prowess, and the extent of her commerce, until in our day we have seen that within the Mediterranean, on the western coast and

at the southern extremity of Africa, in Arabia, in hither India and farther India, she has a population ten times as great as that of the British Isles two centuries ago. And recently, as we have witnessed, — I will not say with how much truth and justice, policy or impolicy, I do not speak at all to the morality of the action, I only speak to the fact, — she has found admission into China, and has carried the Christian religion and the Protestant faith to the doors of three hundred millions of people.

It has been said that whosoever would see the Eastern world before it turns into a Western world must make his visit soon, because steamboats and omnibuses, commerce, and all the arts of Europe, are extending themselves from Egypt to Suez, from Suez to the Indian seas, and from the Indian seas all over the explored regions of the still farther East.

Now, Gentlemen, I do not know what practical views or what practical results may take place from this great expansion of the power of the two branches of Old England. It is not for me to say. I only can see that on this continent all is to be Anglo-American from Plymouth Rock to the Pacific seas, from the north pole to California. That is certain; and in the Eastern world, I only see that you can hardly place a finger on a map of the world and be an inch from an English settlement.

Gentlemen, if there be anything in the supremacy of races, the experiment now in progress will develop it. If there be any truth in the idea that those who issued from the great Caucasian fountain, and spread over Europe, are to react on India and on Asia, and to act on the whole Western world, it may not be for us, nor our children, nor our grandchildren, to see it, but it will

An Anglo-
American
continent.

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be for our descendants of some generation to see the extent of that progress and dominion of the favored races.

For myself, I believe there is no limit fit to be assigned to it by the human mind, because I find at work everywhere, on both sides of the Atlantic, under various forms and degrees of restriction on the one hand, and under various degrees of motive and stimulus on the other hand, in these branches of a common race, the great principle of the *freedom of human thought, and the respectability of individual character*. I find everywhere an elevation of the character of man as man, an elevation of the individual as a component part of society. I find everywhere a rebuke of the idea that the many are

**Freedom of
thought and
respecta-
bility of
character.**

**Government
an agency
for mankind.**

made for the few, or that government is anything but an *agency* for mankind. And I care not beneath what zone, frozen, temperate, or torrid; I care not of what complexion, white or brown; I care not under what circumstances of climate or cultivation, — if I can find a race of men on an inhabitable spot of earth whose general sentiment it is, and whose general feeling it is, that government is made for man, — man, as a religious, moral, and social being, — and not man for government, there I know that I shall find prosperity and happiness.

THE RELIGIOUS CHARACTER

FROM AN ADDRESS ON JEREMIAH MASON,¹ DELIVERED
BEFORE THE SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT OF MASSA-
CHUSETTS, AT BOSTON, NOVEMBER 14, 1848

POLITICAL eminence and professional fame fade away and die with all things earthly. Nothing of character is really permanent but virtue and personal worth. These remain. Whatever of excellence is wrought into the soul itself belongs to both worlds. Real goodness does not attach itself merely to this life; it points to another world. Political or professional reputation cannot last forever; but a conscience void of offence before God and man is an inheritance for eternity. Religion, therefore, is a necessary and indispensable element in any great human character. There is no living without it.

Religion
indispens-
able in
human
greatness.

¹ Jeremiah Mason (1768-1848) is now but a name in the history of American law; but all contemporary testimony agrees that his mind and powers were hardly excelled by those of any other practitioner of his time. Born in Connecticut, he graduated at Yale, began practice in New Hampshire in 1794, and removed from Portsmouth to Boston in 1832. From 1813 to 1817 he was United States senator from New Hampshire, but resigned on his own motion, and in later years, when he consented to take any public office, preferred the humbler duties of a member of the New Hampshire legislature, in which he was efficient in revising the State laws. Webster always felt that his own success was largely due to his association with Mason when both were members of the New Hampshire bar; and of Mason he said: "The characteristics of his mind, as I think, were real greatness, strength, and sagacity."

Religion is the tie that connects man with his Creator, and holds him to his throne. If that tie be all sundered, all broken, he floats away, a worthless atom in the universe; its proper attractions all gone, its destiny thwarted, and its whole future nothing but darkness, desolation, and death.. A



Jeremiah Mason.

man with no sense of religious duty is he whom the Scriptures describe, in such terse but terrific language, as living "without God in the world."¹ Such a man is out of his proper being, out of the circle of all his duties, out of the circle of all his happiness, and away, far, far away, from the purposes of his creation.

A mind like Mr. Mason's, active, thoughtful, penetrating, sedate, could not but meditate deeply on the condition of man below, and feel its responsibilities. He could not look on this mighty system,

"This universal frame, thus wondrous fair,"

without feeling that it was created and upheld by an Intelligence to which all other intelligences must be responsible. I am bound to say that in the course of my life I never met with an individual, in any profession or condition of life, who always spoke, and always

¹ Ephesians ii. 12.

thought, with such awful reverence of the power and presence of God. No irreverence, no lightness, even no too familiar allusion to God and his attributes, ever escaped his lips. The very notion of a Supreme Being was, with him, made up of awe and solemnity. It filled the whole of his great mind with the strongest emotions. A man like him, with all his proper sentiments and sensibilities alive in him, must, in this state of existence, have something to believe and something to hope for; or else, as life is advancing to its close and parting, all is heart-sinking and oppression. Depend upon it, whatever may be the mind of an old man, old age is only really happy when, on feeling the enjoyments of this world pass away, it begins to lay a stronger hold on those of another.¹

Mason's
religious
character.

¹ In connection with these remarks on religion and reverence, it is interesting to note what Mr. Webster said in his address at a meeting of the Suffolk (Boston) Bar, Sept. 12, 1845, the day of the funeral of Joseph Story (1779-1845), poet, commentator on the Constitution, law professor, and justice of the United States Supreme Court:

"One may live as a conqueror, a king, or a magistrate; but he must lie as a man. The bed of death brings every human being to his pure individuality; to the intense contemplation of that deepest and most solemn of all relations, the relation between the creature and his Creator. Here it is that fame and renown cannot assist us; that all external things must fail to aid us; that even friends, affection, and human love and devotedness, cannot succor us. This relation, the true foundation of all duty, a relation perceived and felt by conscience and confirmed by revelation, our illustrious friend, now deceased, always acknowledged. He revered the Scriptures of truth, honored the pure morality which they teach, and clung to the hopes of future life which they impart. He beheld enough in nature, in himself, and in all that can be known of things seen, to feel assured that there is a Supreme Power, without whose providence not a sparrow falleth to the ground. To this gracious being he trusted himself for time and for eternity; and the last words of his lips ever heard by mortal ears were a fervent supplication to his Maker to take him to himself."

THE CONSTITUTION AND THE UNION

FROM A SPEECH DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE
UNITED STATES, MARCH 7, 1850¹

MR. PRESIDENT,—I wish to speak to-day, not as a Massachusetts man, nor as a Northern man, but as an American, and a member of the Senate of the United States. It is fortunate that there is a Senate of the United States; a body not yet moved from its propriety, not lost to a just sense of its own dignity and its own high responsibilities, and a body to which the country looks, with confidence, for wise, moderate, patriotic, and healing counsels. It is not to be denied that we live in the midst of strong agitations, and are surrounded by very considerable dangers to our institutions and government. The imprisoned winds are let loose. The East, the North, and the stormy South combine to throw the whole sea into commotion, to toss its billows to the skies, and disclose its profoundest depths. I do not affect to regard myself, Mr. President, as holding, or as fit to hold, the helm in this combat with the political elements; but I have a duty to perform, and I mean to perform it with fidelity, not without a sense of existing dangers, but not without hope. I have a part to act, not for my own security or safety, for I am looking out for no fragment upon which to float away from the wreck, if wreck there must be, but for the good of the whole, and the preservation of all; and there is that

¹ In the debate on Henry Clay's Compromise resolutions.

which will keep me to my duty during this struggle, whether the sun and the stars shall appear, or shall not appear, for many days. I speak to-day for the preservation of the Union. "Hear me for my cause." I speak to-day, out of a solicitous and anxious heart, for the restoration to the country of that quiet and that harmony which make the blessings of this Union so rich, and so dear to us all. These are the topics that I propose to myself to discuss; these are the motives, and the sole motives, that influence me in the wish to communicate my opinions to the Senate and the country; and if I can do anything, however little, for the promotion of these ends, I shall have accomplished all that I expect.

For the
preserva-
tion of the
Union.



Henry Clay.

Mr. President, I should much prefer to have heard from every member on this floor declarations of opinion that this Union could never be dissolved, than the declaration of opinion by anybody that, in any case, under the pressure of any circumstances, such a dissolution was possible. I hear with distress and anguish the word "secession," espe-

Peaceable
secession
impossible.

cially when it falls from the lips of those who are patriotic, and known to the country, and known all over the world, for their political services. Secession! Peaceable secession! Sir, your eyes and mine are never destined to see that miracle. The dismemberment of this vast country without convulsion! The breaking up of the fountains of the great deep without ruffling the surface! Who is so foolish — I beg everybody's pardon — as to expect to see any such thing? Sir, he who sees these States now revolving in harmony around a common centre, and expects to see them quit their places and fly off without convulsion, may look the next hour to see the heavenly bodies rush from their spheres, and jostle against each other in the realms of space, without causing the wreck of the universe. There can be no such thing as a peaceable secession. Peaceable secession is an utter impossibility. Is the great Constitution under which we live, covering this whole country, — is it to be thawed and melted away by secession, as the snows on the mountain melt under the influence of a vernal sun, disappear almost unobserved, and run off? No, Sir! No, Sir! I will not state what might produce the disruption of the Union; but, Sir, I see as plainly as I see the sun in heaven what that disruption itself must produce; I see that it must produce war, and such a war as I will not describe, in its twofold character.

① Peaceable secession! Peaceable secession! The concurrent agreement of all the members of this great republic to separate? A voluntary separation, with alimony on one side and on the other! Why, what would be the result? Where is the line to be drawn? What States are to secede? What is to remain American? What am I to be? An American no longer? Am I to become a sectional man, a local man, a separat-

ist, with no country in common with the gentlemen who sit around me here, or who fill the other house of Congress? Heaven forbid! Where is the flag of the republic to remain? Where is the eagle still to tower? or is he to cower, and shrink, and fall to the ground? Why, Sir, our ancestors, our fathers and our grandfathers, those of them that are yet living amongst us with prolonged lives, would rebuke and reproach us; and our children and our grandchildren would cry out shame upon us, if we of this generation should dishonor these ensigns of the power of the government and the harmony of that Union which is every day felt among us with so much joy and gratitude. What is to become of the army? What is to become of the navy? What is to become of the public lands? How is each of the thirty States to defend itself?

I know, although the idea has not been stated distinctly, there is to be, or it is supposed possible that there will be, a Southern Confederacy. / I do not mean, when I allude to this statement, The idea of
a Southern
Confederacy. that any one seriously contemplates such a state of things. I do not mean to say that it is true, but I have heard it suggested elsewhere that the idea has been entertained, that, after the dissolution of this Union, a Southern Confederacy might be formed. I am sorry, Sir, that it has ever been thought of, talked of, or dreamed of, in the wildest flights of human imagination. But the idea, so far as it exists, must be of a separation assigning the slave States to one side and the free States to the other. Sir, I may express myself too strongly, perhaps, but there are impossibilities in the natural as well as in the physical world, and I hold the idea of a separation of these States, those that are free to form one government, and those that are slave-

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holding to form another, as such an impossibility. We could not separate the States by any such line, if we were to draw it. We could not sit down here to-day and draw a line of separation that would satisfy any five men in the country. There are natural causes that would keep and tie us together, and there are social and domestic relations which we could not break if we would, and which we should not if we could.

Liberty and Union. Instead of speaking of the possibility or utility of secession, instead of dwelling in those caverns of darkness, instead of groping with those ideas so full of all that is horrid and horrible, let us come out into the light of day; let us enjoy the fresh air of Liberty and Union; let us cherish those hopes which belong to us; let us devote ourselves to those great objects that are fit for our consideration and our action; let us raise our conceptions to the magnitude and the importance of the duties that devolve upon us; let our comprehension be as broad as the country for which we act, our aspirations as high as its certain destiny; let us not be pygmies in a case that calls for men. Never did there devolve on any generation of men higher trusts than now devolve upon us, for the preservation of this Constitution and the harmony and peace of all who are destined to live under it. Let us make our generation one of the strongest and brightest links in that golden chain which is destined, I fondly believe, to grapple the people of all the States to this Constitution for ages to come. We have a great popular; constitutional government, guarded by law and by judicature, and defended by the affections of the whole people. No monarchical throne presses these States together, no iron chain of military power encircles them;

they live and stand under a government popular in its form, representative in its character, founded upon principles of equality, and so constructed, we hope, as to last forever. In all its history it has been beneficent; it has trodden down no man's liberty; it has crushed no State. Its daily respiration is liberty and patriotism; its yet youthful veins are full of enterprise, courage, and honorable love of glory and renown. Large before, the country has now, by recent events, become vastly larger. This republic now extends, with a vast breadth, across the whole continent. The two great seas of the world wash the one and the other shore. We realize, on a mighty scale, the beautiful description of the ornamental border of the buckler of Achilles:—

“Now, the broad shield complete, the artist crowned
With his last hand, and poured the ocean round;
In living silver seemed the waves to roll,
And beat the buckler's verge, and bound the whole.”¹

¹ Pope's translation of Homer's *Iliad*, book xviii., lines 701-4. Webster changes the first word, “Thus,” to “Now.”

THE ADDITION TO THE CAPITOL

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE LAYING OF THE CORNER STONE OF THE ADDITION TO THE CAPITOL OF THE UNITED STATES, AT WASHINGTON, JULY 4, 1851

FELLOW-CITIZENS, — I greet you well ; I give you joy on the return of this anniversary ; and I felicitate you, also, on the more particular purpose of which this ever-memorable day has been chosen to witness the fulfil-



The Capitol at Washington.

ment. Hail ! all hail ! I see before and around me a mass of faces glowing with cheerfulness and patriotic pride. I see thousands of eyes turned towards other eyes, all sparkling with gratification and delight. This is the New World ! This is America ! This is Washington ! and this the Capitol of the United States !

And where else, among the nations, can the seat of government be surrounded, on any day of any year, by those who have more reason to rejoice in the blessings which they possess? Nowhere, fellow-citizens! assuredly, nowhere! Let us, then, meet this rising sun with joy and thanksgiving!

This is that day of the year which announced to mankind the great fact of American Independence. This fresh and brilliant morning blesses our vision with another beholding of the birthday of our nation; and we see that nation, of recent origin, now among the most considerable and powerful, and spreading over the continent from sea to sea.

Among the first colonists from Europe to this part of America there were some, doubtless, who contemplated the distant consequences of their undertaking, and who saw a great futurity. But, in general, their hopes were limited to the enjoyment of a safe asylum from tyranny, religious and civil, and to respectable subsistence by industry and toil. A thick veil hid our times from their view. But the progress of America, however slow, could not but at length awaken genius, and attract the attention of mankind.

In the early part of the second century of our history, Bishop Berkeley, who, it will be remembered, had resided for some time in Newport, in Rhode Island, wrote his well-known "Verses on the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America." The last stanza of this little poem seems to have been produced by a high poetical inspiration: —

Bishop
Berkeley's
prophecy.

" Westward the course of empire takes its way;
The four first acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day:
Time's noblest offspring is the last."

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This extraordinary prophecy may be considered only as the result of long foresight and uncommon sagacity; of a foresight and sagacity stimulated, nevertheless, by excited feeling and high enthusiasm. So clear a vision of what America would become was not founded on square miles, or on existing numbers, or on any common laws of statistics. It was an intuitive glance into futurity; it was a grand conception, strong, ardent, glowing, embracing all time since the creation of the world, and all regions of which that world is composed, and judging of the future by just analogy with the past. And the inimitable imagery and beauty with which the thought is expressed, joined to the conception itself, render it one of the most striking passages in our language.

On the day of the Declaration of Independence our illustrious fathers performed the first scene
Independence Day. in the last great act of this drama; one in real importance infinitely exceeding that for which the great English poet invokes

“— a muse of fire, . . .

A kingdom for a stage, princes to act,
And monarchs to behold the swelling scene!”¹

The Muse inspiring our fathers was the Genius of Liberty, all on fire with a sense of oppression, and a resolution to throw it off; the whole world was the stage, and higher characters than princes trod it; and, instead of monarchs, countries and nations and the age beheld the swelling scene. How well the characters were cast, and how well each acted his part, and what emotions the whole performance excited, let history, now and hereafter, tell.

¹ Shakespeare, *King Henry the Fifth*, Prologue, lines 1-4.

On the 4th of July, 1776, the Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, declared that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES.

This Declaration, made by most patriotic and resolute men, trusting in the justice of their cause and the protection of Heaven, and yet made not without deep solicitude and anxiety, has now stood for seventy-five years, and still stands. It was sealed in blood. It has met dangers, and overcome them; it has had enemies, and conquered them; it has had detractors, and abashed them all; it has had doubting friends, but it has cleared all doubts away; and now, to-day, raising its august form higher than the clouds, twenty millions of people contemplate it with hallowed love, and the world beholds it, and the consequences which have followed from it, with profound admiration.

This anniversary animates and gladdens and unites all American hearts. On other days of the year we may be party men, indulging in controversies more or less important to the public good; we may have likes and dislikes, and we may maintain our political differences, often with warm, and sometimes with angry, feelings. But to-day we are Americans all; and all nothing but Americans. As the great luminary over our heads, dissipating mists and fogs, now cheers the whole hemisphere, so do the associations connected with this day disperse all cloudy and sullen weather in the minds and hearts of true Americans. Every man's heart swells within him; every man's port and bearing become somewhat more proud and lofty, as he remembers that seventy-five years have rolled away, and that the great inheritance of liberty is still his: his, undiminished and unimpaired;

Liberty the
inheritance
of every
American.

his in all its original glory : his to enjoy, his to protect, and his to transmit to future generations.

Fellow-citizens, this inheritance which we enjoy to-day is not only an inheritance of liberty, but of our own peculiar American liberty. Liberty has existed in other times, in other countries, and in other forms. There has been a Grecian liberty, bold and powerful, full of spirit, eloquence, and fire ; a liberty which produced multitudes of great men, and has transmitted one immortal name, the name of Demosthenes, to posterity. But still it was a liberty of disconnected States, sometimes united, indeed, by temporary leagues and confederacies, but often involved in wars between themselves. The sword of Sparta turned its sharpest edge against Athens, enslaved her, and devastated Greece ; and, in her turn, Sparta was compelled to bend before the power of Thebes. And let it ever be remembered, especially let the truth sink deep into all American minds, that it was the *want of union* among her several States which finally gave the mastery of all Greece to Philip of Macedon.

Fellow-citizens, fifty-eight years ago Washington stood on this spot to execute a duty like that which has now been performed. He then laid the corner-stone of the original Capitol laid by Washington. He was at the head of the government, at that time weak in resources, burdened with debt, just struggling into political existence and respectability, and agitated by the heaving waves which were overturning European thrones. But even then, in many important respects, the government was strong. It was strong in Washington's own great character ; it was strong in the wisdom and patriotism of other eminent

The Corner-stone of the original Capitol laid by Washington.

public men, his political associates and fellow-laborers; and it was strong in the affections of the people.

Since that time astonishing changes have been wrought in the condition and prospects of the American people; and a degree of progress witnessed with which the world can furnish no parallel. As we review the course of that progress, wonder and amazement arrest our attention at every step. The present occasion, although allowing of no lengthened remarks, may yet, perhaps, admit of a short comparative statement of important subjects of national interest as they existed at that day, and as they now exist. I have adopted for this purpose the tabular form of statement, as being the most brief and significant.¹

COMPARATIVE TABLE

	Year 1793.	Year 1851.	Year 1900.
Number of States	15	31	45
Representatives and Senators in Congress . . .	135	295	476
Population of the United States	3,929,328	23,267,498	76,303,387 ²
Population of Boston . .	18,038	136,871	560,892
Population of Baltimore .	13,503	169,054	508,957
Population of Philadelphia	42,520	409,045	1,293,697
Population of New York (city)	33,121	515,507	3,437,202
Population of Washington		40,075	278,718
Population of Richmond . .	4,000	27,582	85,050
Population of Charleston .	16,359	42,983	55,807
Amount of receipts into the Treasury	\$5,720,624	\$52,312,980	\$669,595,431
Amount of expenditures . .	\$7,529,575	\$48,005,879	\$590,068,371
Amount of imports . . .	\$31,000,000	\$215,725,995	\$849,941,184
Amount of exports . . .	\$26,109,000	\$217,517,130	\$1,370,763,571
Amount of tonnage (tons)	520,764	3,772,440	5,164,839

¹ Mr. Webster's table contained, of course, the figures for 1793 and 1851 only. For the sake of illustration, those for 1900 are now added.

² Including Hawaii, but not the other foreign possessions.

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	Year 1793.	Year 1851.	Year 1900.
Area of the United States in square miles	805,461	3,314,365	3,616,484 ¹
Rank and file of the army	5,120	10,000	67,587
Militia (enrolled)	. . .	2,006,456	10,149,184 ²
Navy of the United States (vessels)	(None.)	76	140
Navy armament (ord- nance)	. . .	2,012	. . .
Treaties and conventions with foreign powers	9	90	. . .
Light-houses and light- boats	12	372	843 ³
Expenditures for ditto	\$12,061	\$529,265	. . .
Area of the Capitol	$\frac{1}{2}$ acre.	$4\frac{1}{3}$ acres.	$3\frac{1}{2}$ acres. ⁴
Number of miles of rail- road in operation	. . .	10,287	190,833 ⁵
Cost of ditto	. . .	\$306,607,954	\$11,692,817,066 ⁶
Number of miles in course of construction	. . .	10,092	1,329
Lines of electric tele- graph, in miles	. . .	15,000	210,000 ⁷
Number of post-offices	209	21,551	76,945
Number of miles of post- route	5,642	196,290	511,808
Amount of revenue from post-offices	\$104,747	\$6,727,867	\$111,631,193
Amount of expenditures of Post-office Depart- ment	\$72,040	\$6,024,567	\$115,554,920
Number of miles of mail transportation	. . .	52,465,724	. . .
Number of colleges	19 .	121	484
Public libraries	35	694	5,383 ⁸
Volumes in ditto	75,000	2,201,632	44,591,851
School libraries	. . .	10,000	. . .
Volumes in ditto	. . .	2,000,000	. . .
Emigrants from Europe to the United States	10,000	299,610	448,572 ⁹
Coinage at the Mint	\$9,664	\$52,019,465	\$141,351,960

¹ Including Alaska, but no other possession not contiguous to the United States.

² Male population available for defence.

³ Total lighted aids in the year 1893.

⁴ The area given for 1851 was incorrect.

⁵ Exclusive of double tracks and sidings.

⁶ Total liabilities.

⁷ Excluding private lines.

⁸ Including public, society, and school libraries.

⁹ Total from all parts of the world.

Who does not feel that, when President Washington laid his hand on the foundation of the first Capitol, he performed a great work of perpetuation of the Union and the Constitution? Who does not feel that this seat of the general government, healthful in its situation, central in its position, near the mountains whence gush springs of wonderful virtue, teeming with Nature's richest products, and yet not far from the bays and the great estuaries of the sea, easily accessible and generally agreeable in climate and association, does give strength to the union of these States? that this city, bearing an immortal name, with its broad streets and avenues, its public squares and magnificent edifices of the general government, erected for the purpose of carrying on within them the important business of the several departments, for the reception of wonderful and curious inventions, for the preservation of the records of American learning and genius, of extensive collections of the products of nature and art, brought hither for study and comparison from all parts of the world; adorned with numerous churches, and sprinkled over, I am happy to say, with many public schools, where all the children of the city, without distinction, have the means of obtaining a good education, and with academies and colleges, professional schools and public libraries, — should continue to receive, as it has heretofore received, the fostering care of Congress, and should be regarded as the permanent seat of the national government?

The City
of Wash-
ington.

With each succeeding year new interest is added to the spot; it becomes connected with all the historical associations of our country, with her statesmen and her orators; and, alas! its cemetery is annually enriched by the ashes of her chosen sons.

Before us is the broad and beautiful river, separating two of the original thirteen States, which a late President, a man of determined purpose and inflexible will, but patriotic heart, desired to span with arches of ever-enduring granite, symbolical of the firmly cemented union of the North and the South. That President was General Jackson.

On its banks repose the ashes of the Father of his Country; and at our side, by a singular felicity of position, overlooking the city which he designed, and which bears his name, rises to his memory the marble column, sublime in its simple grandeur, and fitly intended to reach a loftier height than any similar structure on the surface of the whole earth.¹



Washington Monument.

Let the votive offerings of his grateful countrymen be freely contributed to carry this monument higher and still higher. May I say, as on another occasion, "Let it rise; let it rise till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit!"²

¹ The Washington monument here mentioned had been begun in 1848. Work was continued, by State and other donations, until 1855, when it was abandoned until 1877. But as the unfinished condition of the shaft was felt to be a sort of national disgrace, its construction was resumed in the last-named year, under a Congressional appropriation, and steadily pushed forward until the completion of the noble obelisk in 1884, at a total cost of \$1,300,000. It is built of white Maryland marble, and is 555 feet high — the loftiest masonry construction in the world, though much surpassed in height by the steel Eiffel Tower in Paris.

² From the address at the laying of the corner-stone of Bunker Hill Monument.

Fellow-citizens, what contemplations are awakened in our minds as we assemble here to re-enact a scene like that performed by Washington! Methinks I see his venerable form now before me, as presented in the glorious statue by Houdon, now in the Capitol of Virginia. He is dignified and grave; but concern and anxiety seem to soften the lineaments of his countenance. The government over which he presides is yet in the crisis of experiment. Not free from troubles at home, he sees the world in commotion and in arms all around him. He sees that imposing foreign powers are half disposed to try the strength of the recently established American government. We perceive that mighty thoughts, mingled with fears as well as with hopes, are struggling within him. He heads a short procession over these then naked fields; he crosses yonder stream on a fallen tree; he ascends to the top of this eminence, whose original oaks of the forest stand as thick around him as if the spot had been devoted to Druidical worship, and here he performs the appointed duty of the day.

And now, fellow-citizens, if this vision were a reality; if Washington actually were now amongst us, and if he could draw around him the shades of the great public men of his own day, patriots and warriors, orators and statesmen, and were to address us in their presence, would he not say to us: "Ye men of this generation, I rejoice and thank God for being able to see that our labors and toils and sacrifices were not in vain. You are prosperous, you are happy, you are grateful: the fire of liberty burns brightly and steadily in your hearts, while *duty* and the *law* restrain it from bursting forth in wild and destructive conflagration. Cherish liberty, as you love

George
Wash-
ington's
monition.

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it; cherish its securities, as you wish to preserve it. Maintain the Constitution which we labored so painfully to establish, and which has been to you such a source of inestimable blessings. Preserve the union of the States, cemented as it was by our prayers, our tears and our blood. Be true to God, to your country, and to your duty. So shall the whole Eastern world follow the morning sun to contemplate you as a nation; so shall all generations honor you, as they honor us; and so shall that Almighty Power which so graciously protected us, and which now protects you, shower its everlasting blessings upon you and your posterity."

Great Father of your Country! we heed your words; we feel their force as if you now uttered them with lips of flesh and blood. Your example teaches us, your affectionate addresses teach us, your public life teaches us your sense of the value of the blessings of the Union. Those blessings our fathers have tasted, and we have tasted, and still taste. Nor do we intend that those who come after us shall be denied the same high fruition. Our honor as well as our happiness is concerned. We cannot, we dare not, we will not, betray our sacred trust. We will not filch from posterity the treasure placed in our hands to be transmitted to other generations. The bow that gilds the clouds in the heavens, the pillars that uphold the firmament, may disappear and fall away in the hour appointed by the will of God; but until that day comes, or so long as our lives may last, no ruthless hand shall undermine that bright arch of Union and Liberty which spans the continent from Washington to California. Fellow-citizens, we must sometimes be tolerant to folly, and patient at the sight of the extreme waywardness of men; but I confess that, when I reflect on the renown of our past

**The sacred
trust of
Americans.**

history, on our present prosperity and greatness, and on what the future hath yet to unfold, and when I see that there are men who can find in all this nothing good, nothing valuable, nothing truly glorious, I feel that all their reason has fled away from them, and left the entire control over their judgment and their actions to insanity and fanaticism; and more than all, fellow-citizens, if the purposes of fanatics and disunionists should be accomplished, the patriotic and intelligent of our generation would seek to hide themselves from the scorn of the world, and go about to find dishonorable graves.

Fellow-citizens, take courage; be of good cheer. We shall come to no such ignoble end. We shall live, and not die. During the period allotted to our several lives we shall continue to rejoice in the return of this anniversary. The ill-omened sounds of fanaticism will be hushed; the ghastly spectres of Secession and Disunion will disappear; and the enemies of united constitutional liberty, if their hatred cannot be appeased, may prepare to have their eyeballs seared as they behold the steady flight of the American eagle, on his burnished wings, for years and years to come.

President Fillmore, it is your singularly good fortune to perform an act such as that which the earliest of your



Millard Fillmore.

The preservation of the Union foretold.

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predecessors performed fifty-eight years ago. You stand where he stood ; you lay your hand on the corner-stone of a building designed greatly to extend that whose corner-stone he laid. Changed, changed is everything around. The same sun, indeed, shone upon his head which now shines upon yours. The same broad river rolled at his feet, and bathes his last resting-place, that now rolls at yours. But the site of this city was then mainly an open field. Streets and avenues have since been laid out and completed, squares and public grounds enclosed and ornamented, until the city which bears his name, although comparatively inconsiderable in numbers and wealth, has become quite fit to be the seat of government of a great and united people.

And now, fellow-citizens, with hearts void of hatred, envy, and malice towards our own countrymen, or any of them, or towards the subjects or citizens of other governments, or towards any member of the great family of man ; but exulting, nevertheless, in our own peace, security, and happiness, in the grateful remembrance of the past, and the glorious hopes of the future, let us return to our homes, and with all humility and devotion offer our thanks to the Father of all our mercies, political, social, and religious.

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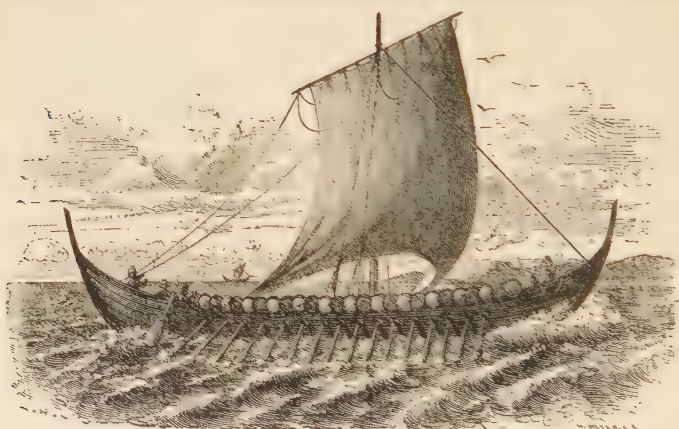
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